Purāṇas. Devībhāgavata
Śrimad Devi Bhagavatam

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THE

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OF THE

HINDUS

TRANSLATED BY

VARIOUS SANSKRIT SCHOLARS.

EDITED BY

Major B. D. Basu, I. M. S. (Retired.)

VOLUME XXVI.

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TRANSLATED BY

SWAMI VIJNANANANDA.

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FOREWORD.

This part is mainly devoted to the deeds and stotras of the Devî in Her various manifestations of Durgâ, Kâlî, Bhavânî, etc. The Devî Bhâgavatam inculcates the worship of Śakti and as such it is held in great esteem by the Śâktas, to whom the present work will be found very agreeable and useful, especially to those who are unacquainted with Sanskrit.

THE TRANSLATOR.

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OM TAT SAT.

ŚRÎ MAD DEVÎ BHÂGAVATAM.

THE FIFTH BOOK.

CHAPTER I.

1-5. The Riṣis said:—"The great legendary story, the life of Śrî Kriṣṇa, supremely divine, destructive of all sins, has been narrated by you, O Sûta! But, O Blessed One! You, though highly intelligent, have dwelt on it not at a great length; hence many doubts are cropping up in our minds. A very difficult tapasyâ was performed by Vâsudeva, the part incarnate of Viṣṇu, who had to go to forest to worship Śiva. Next, it has been known that the Devî Pârvatî, the part incarnate of the Great Mother, the Mother of the universe, the Supreme, and Perfect offered boons to Śrî Kriṣṇa. How did it then come to pass that Śrî Kriṣṇa, being himself the God, had to worshop Pârvatî and Mahâdeva? Is it that Śrî Kriṣṇa was inferior to Mahâdeva and Pârvatî? This is our doubt."

6-7. Sûta spoke:—"Hear then, the reasons, O noble Riṣis! that I heard from Vyâsa; I will now sing before you those meritorious deeds of Śrî Kriṣṇâ." The son of Parîkṣit, the intelligent Janamejaya had also the same doubts that you now have, when he heard the story before from Vyâsa; and he asked the same questions that you now ask.

8-11. Janamejaya said:—"O son of Satyavatî! I have heard from you much about the Supreme Goddess, the Highest Cause; still the doubts are not leaving me. O Fortunate One! Kriṣṇa the Deva of the Devas, the Viṣṇu incarnate, worshipped Śambhû and had to perform dire penances; this is my great wonder! He is the soul of all the Jîvas, the One Ruler and Lord of this world and He is able to confer all the Siddhis; how is it, then, that the Lord Hari had to perform very difficult asceticism like an ordinary mortal. He who is able to create this universe, moving and non-moving, He who is able to preserve and destroy it, why did He practise such a terrible penance."

12-54. Vyâsa said:—"True it has been said by you that Vâsudeva, the Janârdana, is the destroyer of the Daityas and He is able to create

and preserve the Devas and do all other acts for them. But the Great Lord assumed a human body ; therefore he had to perform his duties like a man and observe the Varṇa and Âs'rama Dharmas pertaining to human beings. Respecting the elderly persons, worshipping the spiritual teachers, doing service to the Brâhmaṇas, adoring and propitiating the Devas, feeling sorrow at times of sorrow, feeling pleasure at times of happiness, feeling dejection or expressing censure or scandal, or having sexual intercourse with women, in other words, to feel lust, anger, greediness and other passions when their proper time arises. All these are natural to all human beings; how can, then, Śrî Kriṣṇa though intrinsically of pure qualities, become Nirguṇa (devoid of human qualities) when he assumed a human body which is Saguṇa, *i. e.*, with qualities. O Ruler of men ! The extinction of the Yâdava race by the curse of Gândhârî, the daughter of Subala, and the curse of a Brâhmin, Kriṣṇa's leaving his human coil, the stealing away of his wives, the robbing of their wealth on the way by the dacoits of the Âvîra tribe, Arjuna's becoming powerless to hurl any weapons on those dacoits, Kriṣṇa's not knowing anything about the stealing away of Pradyumna and Aniruddha from his Dvârkâ palace, these all correspond verily to exertions and failings apropriate to human bodies. Again the Riṣî Nârâyaṇa is the part incarnate of Viṣṇu, and Vâsudeva is the part incarnate of the Riṣî Nârâyaṇa ; hence what wonder is there, if Vâsudeva be seen to adore and propitiate Śiva ? Śiva is the God of gods; and He is the Lord of all the causal bodies that exist; in the state of Suṣupti (deep sleep). In this respect, Śiva is the creator of Viṣṇu and Viṣṇu worships Him in this light. Râma, Kriṣṇa and others are all part incarnations of Viṣṇu; so there is no wonder if they worship Śiva. The letter A is Bhagvân Brahmâ ; the letter "U" is Bhagvân Hari; the letter "M" is Bhagvân Rudra and the half letter *m* is Mahes'varî, the Supreme Mother of the universe. The sages, therefore, consider Viṣṇu superior to Brahmâ; they again consider Rudra superior to Viṣṇu and Mâhes'varî (Turîya State) again superior to Rudra. The speciality of the half letter is that it can never be uttered ; it is the symbol of the Eternal Devî. In all the S'âstras, therefore, the superiority of the Devî is established. Viṣṇu is superior to Brahmâ; Rudra is superior to Viṣṇu. Therefore no doubt can arise in Kriṣṇa's worshipping Śiva. It is through the will of Śiva that a second Rudra originated from the forehead of Brahmâ (to offer boons to him (*i. e.*, to Brahmâ). This second Rudra is venerable and entitled to all worship; what to speak of the First Rudra ? O King ! It is through the proximity of the Devî that the importance and superiority of Śiva is thus established. Thus the incarnations of Hari arise in yugas after yugas through the intervention of the Yoga

Mâyâ ; so there is no need to discuss on this point. Why to Achyuta alone, to Brahmâ and Śiva also She gives troubles for getting involved into incarnations, She the Yoga Mâyâ who is indirectly, with the twinkings of Her eyes, creating, preserving and destroying this universe. It is the Yoga Mâyâ that caused Krisna to be transferred from his lying-in-chamber to the village Vraja and then protected him in the house of the cowherd Nanda ; afterwards took him to Mathurâ for the destruction of Kamsa, whence he was led again out of Jarâsandha's fear to the city of Dvârkâ. It is She that created from Her Ownself the eight Nâikâs (the leading mistresses) and also sixteen thousand and fifty women for the pleasure and enjoyment of Krisna Bhagwân, the incarnation of Ananta (Visnu Bhagavân) ; thus Krisna Bhagavân was made completely subservient to them just like a perfect slave. When a young woman, though she is alone, can bind a man down by the network of Mâyâ, like a strong iron chain, what wonder is there that the sixteen thousand and fifty women would make Krisna play in their hands like a Śuka bird and make him an instrument to serve any purpose that they liked Śrî Krisna got himself so much under the control of Satyabhâmâ that He went gladly under her commands to Indra's heavens to get the Pârijâta flowers. There he had to fight with Indra and subsequently stole away the Pârijâta tree and gave it to Satyabhâmâ as a very valuable ornament to be kept in her room. Behold ! The same Krisna, by His own prowess, defeated Śis'upâla and others for the preservation of religion and then stole away Rukminî, the daughter of Bhîma and afterwards married her as his legal wife ; where is the rule, then, observed that it is a sin to take away another's wife ? Thus all embodied beings get themselves subdued by Ahamkâra and do acts, good or bad, confounded and deluded by the network of Moha that always drags one down below. From the Mûlâ Prakriti are born Brahmâ, Visnu, and Hara and from the Tâmasic Ahamkâra of Prakriti is created this whole cosmos, moving and non moving. The lotus-born Brahmâ becomes free when he is free from Ahamkâra ; otherwise He becomes engaged in this world affairs. When freed from this Ahamkâra, all the Jîvas become free ; and their houses, wealth, wives, sons and brothers are quite powerless to tie them down ; but when bound by Ahamkâra, the Jîvas come under their control. O king! This Ahamkâra is the cause of bondage to all the beings ; " I am the doer, this work is done by my power ; or this I will do myself' thinking thus, the embodied beings fall themselves under this bondage. An earthen pot cannot be made without earth ; no effects can be visible without a cause; consequently Visnu is preserving this universe, because of this Ahamkâra (imposed on

him by Prakriti). The human beings are alway drowned in their cares and anxieties simply because they are bound by this Ahamkâra; when they become free from this Ahamkâra, their cares and anxieties at once vanish. Moha (delusion) comes out of Ahamkâra ; world and the enjoyments thereof come out of Moha ; otherwise how can it be accounited for, that Hari and others, the mine of all good and auspiciousness, take their several incarnations in various wombs ? Neither Moha nor this world comes to those that are bereft of Ahamkâra. Men are of three kinds, Sâtvic, Râjasic, and Tâmasic ; O king ! Brahmâ, Viṣṇu and Śiva are sprung respectively from the Râjasic, Sâtvic, and Tâmasic Ahamkâras. In these three, the three Ahamkâras are always to be found, so the Munis, that have realised the Real Essence, declare. They are all bound by this Ahamkâra ; there is no doubt in this. The Paṇḍits of dull intellect, and deluded by Mâyâ declare that Viṣṇu takes various incarnations out of his own free will ; for when it is seen that men of even inferior intellects do not entertain any desire to enter into the wombs, painful and terrible ; how will Viṣṇu, then, the Holder of the discus, like to come into this womb ! The slayer of Madhu, the Vaiṣṇavas say, entered all at once into the wombs of Kaus'alyâ and Devakî, full of faesces and other dirty things, of His own free will. But you must think out what happiness can Madhusûdana, quitting his Vaikuṇṭha Heavens, attain in this womb, full of so many troubles, and where arise, like poisons, hundreds of cares and thoughts to torment an individual ! Especially when it is seen that human beings perform asceticisin, sacrifice Yajñas and do various charities, that they would avoid thus entering in wombs, which is very painful and terrible. How can Bhagavân Viṣṇu be called independent ? If so, He would never have yielded to enter into various wombs. Therefore, O king ! Know this that this whole universe is under the control of Yoga Mâyâ ; the Devas, men, birds, what more everything from Brahmâ down to a blade of grass are all under the control of Yoga Mâyâ. Brahmâ, Viṣṇu and Hara all are bound by the rope of Her Mâyâ. So they roam easily by Her Mâyâ from womb to womb like a spider.

Here ends the First Chapter of the Fifth Book on the superiority of Rûdra over Viṣṇu in the Mahâ Purâṇam of Śrîmad Devî Bhâgavatam by Maharṣi Veda Vyâsa, consisting of eighteen thousand verses.

CHAPTER II.

1-2. The king said :—" Lord ! You have described fully the glory of the Mahâ Mayâ Yoges'varî ; now describe Her Life and Character ; I am very eager to hear them. This whole universe, moving and nonmoving, has been created by Mahes'varî ; who is there that desires not to hear Her Glory!"

3-7. Vyâsa spoke :—" O king ! You are very intelligent ; I will describe in detail all this to you ; whoever does not describe Her Glory to the peaceful and faithful, is certainly low-minded ? In days of yore, a terrible battle ensued between the Devas and Dânava forces on this earth when Mahiṣâsura was the Ruler of this world. O king ! Mahiṣâsura went to the mountain of Sumeru and performed a very severe and excellent tapasyâ, wonderful even to the gods. O king ! Meditating on his Iṣṭa Devatâ (the deity for his worship) in his heart, elapsed full ten thousand years, when Brâhmî the Grandfather of all the Lokas, was pleased with him. The fourfaced Brahmâ, arrived there on his vehicle, the swan, asked Mahis'âsura ' O One of virtuous soul ! Ask from me what is your desired object ; I will grant thee boon."

8. Mahiṣa said.—"O Lord, Lotus-eyed ! I want to become immortal ! therefore O Thou, the Grandfather of the Devas ! Dost thou do for me so that I have no fear of death."

9-11. Brahmâ said :—" O Mahiṣa ! Birth must be followed by death, and death must be followed by birth ; this is the eternal law of nature. Then know this as certain that when one is born, one must die ; and when one dies, one will be born. O Lord of the Dânavas ! What more to say than this, that high mountains, vast oceans, and all the beings will die when time will come. O Ruler of the earth ! You are virtuous ; therefore ask any other boon than this immortality ; I will grant that to you"

12-13. Mahiṣa said :—" O Grand Sire ! Grant, then, that no Deva, Dânava, nor human being of the male sex can cause my death. There is none among women who can cause my death. Therefore, O Lotus-eyed ! Let woman be the cause of my death ; how can women slay me ! They are too weak to kill me!"

14. Brahmâ said :—" O Lord of the Dânavas ! Your death will certainly occur, at any time, through a woman ; O Highly Fortunate One ! No man will be able to cause your death."

15. Vyâsa said :—" Thus granting him the boon, Brahmâ went to his own abode ; the lord of the Dânavas, too, returned to his place, very glad."

16. The king said :—"O Bhagavân ! Whose son was this powerful Mahiṣâsura ; how his birth took place? and why, too, did he get a body of a buffalo ?"

17-26. Vyâsa said :—" O king ! Rambha and Karambha were the two sons of Danu ; these two Dânavas were far famed in this world for their pre-eminence." " O king ! They had no issues ; hence, desirous of issues, they went to the sacred banks of the Indus (Pañcha Nada) and there performed severe asceticism for long years." Karambha got himself submerged in water and thus began his severe tapasyâ ; while the other, Rambha, had recourse to a juicy peepul tree (haunted by Yakshiṇîs) and there began to worship Fire. Rambha remained, engaged in worshipping the Five Fires ; knowing this, Indra, the Lord of S'achî, was pained and hurried thither, being very anxious. Going to Pañcha Nada, Indra assumed the form of a crocodile and caught hold of the legs of the wicked Karambha and killed him. Hearing of the death of his brother, Rambha got very much enraged and wishing to offer his own head as an oblation to the Fire, he wanted to cut off his own head; he, being infuriated, held the hairs of his head by his left hand, and, catching hold of a good axe, by his right hand, was on the point of cutting it, when the Fire gave him knowledge, desisted him from this act and spoke thus :—" You are stupid; why have you desired to cut off your own head ; killing one's ownself is a great sin ; and there is no means of deliverance from this sin. Why are you then ready to execute it ?" Do not seek your death now ; what end will that serve you ? Rather ask boons from me ; thus you will get your welfare."

27-31. Vyâsa said :—" O king ! Hearing thus the sweet words of Fire, Rambha quitted the hold of his hairs and said :—O Lord of the Devas ! If thou art pleased, grant my desired boon that a son be born unto me, who will destroy the forces of my enemy and who will conquer the three worlds." " And that son be invincible in every way by the Devas, Dânavas and men, very powerful, assuming forms at will, and respected by all." The Fire said :—" O highly Fortunate ! You will get your son, as you desire ; therefore desist now from your attempting suicide." O highly fortunate Rambha ! With any female of whichever species, you will co-habit, you will get a son, more powerful than you ; there is no doubt in this.

32-50. Vyâsa said :—"O king ! Hearing thus the sweet words of the Fire as desired, Rambha, the chief of the Dânavas, went, surrounded by Yakṣas, to a beautiful place, adorned with picturesque sceneries ; when one lovely she-buffalo, who was very maddened with passion, fell to the sight of Rambha. And he desired to have sexual intercourse with her, in preference to other women. The she-buffallo, too, gladly yielded to his purpose and Rambha had sexual intercourse with her, impelled as it were by the destiny. The she-buffalo became pregnant with his semen virile. The Dânava, too, carried the she-buffalo, his dear wife, to Pâtâla (the lower regions) for her protection. On one occasion, another buffalo got excited and wanted to fall upon the she-buffalo. The Dânava was also ready to kill him. The Dânava came hurriedly and struck the buffalo for the safety of his wife ; whereon the excited buffalo attacked him with his horns. The buffalo struck him so violently with his sharp horns that Rambha fell down senseless all on a sudden and finally died. Seeing her husband dead, the she-buffalo quickly fled away in distress and, with terror, she quickly went to the peepul tree and took refuge under the Yakṣas. But that buffalo, excited very much and maddened with vigour, ran in pursuit of her, desiring intercourse with her. On seeing the miserable plight of the weeping she-buffalo, distressed with fear, and seeing the buffalo in pursuit of her, the Yakṣas assembled to protect her. A terrible fight ensued between the buffalo and the Yakṣas, when the buffalo, shot with arrows by them, fell down and died. Rambha was very much liked by the Yakṣas ; so they cremated his dead body for its purification. The she-buffalo, seeing her husband laid in the funeral pyre, expressed her desire to enter also into that fire. The Yakṣas resisted ; but that chaste wife quickly entered into the burning fire along with her husband. When the she-buffalo died, the powerful Mahiṣa rose from his mother's womb from the midst of the funeral pyre ; Rambha, too, emerged from the fire in another form out of his affection towards his son. Rambha was known as Raktavîja after he had changed his form. His son was thus born as a very powerful Dânava and became famous by the name of Mahiṣa. The chief Dânavas installed Mahiṣa on the throne. O king ! The very powerful Raktavîja and the Dânava Mahiṣa, thus took their births and became invincible of the Devas, Dânavas and human beings. O king ! I have now described to you the birth of the highsouled Dânava Mahiṣa and his getting the boon, all in detail.

Here ends the Second Chapter of the Fifth Book on the birth of Mahiṣa Dânava in the Devî Bhâgavatam, the Mahâpurâṇam composed of 18,000 verses by Maharṣi Veda Vyâsa.

CHAPTER III.

1-14. Vyâsa said :—" The very powerful Asura Mahiṣa, puffed up with vanity on his getting the boon, obtained sovereignty and brought the whole world under his control ! He, being the paramount power, began to protect the sea-girt earth acquired by the power of his own arms, over which he had the sole sovereignty, there being no other rival king nor any cause of the slightest fear. His Commander-in-Chief was then the very powerful Chikṣura, maddened with pride ; and Tâmra was in charge of the Royal Treasury, guarded by many soldiers. There were, then, many generals Asilomâ, Viḍâla, Udarka, Vâskala, Trinetra, Kâla, Bandhaka and others, very proud, and each in charge of his own corps respectively and occupying this sea-girt earth. O king ! The powerful kings that reigned before were made subservient and tributary; and those, that fought valiantly befitting the Kṣattriya line, were slain by Mahiṣa. The Brâhmaṇas over the earth becama subservient to Mahiṣa and gave their Yajña offerings to him. When that Mahiṣâsura got the sole sovereign sway of this world, he, proud of his boons, desired to conquer the Heavens. Then Mahiṣa, the Lord of the Daityas, desirous to send an envoy to Indra, the Lord of Śachî, instantly called for the messenger and spoke to him thus :—Go, O hero ! O valiant one ! to Heaven." Act as my messenger and tell Indra fearlessly thus :—"O thousand-eyed one ! Quit the Heavens ; go anywhere you like, or offer your service to the highsouled Mahiṣa ! "He is the lord ; and if you take refuge unto him, he will certainly protect you. Therefore, O Lord of Śachî, better seek the protection of Mahiṣa. " If, O Balasûdana ! Not willing, wield your Vajra at once; we know your powers ; you were, in days of yore, conquered by our ancestors." " O chief of the Sûras ! You are the paramour of Ahalyâ ; your strength is well known, give battle or go anywhere you like."

15-21. Vyâsa said :—" Hearing the messenger's words, Indra became very indignant and laughed and said :—"I did not know, O you stupid, that you were maddened with vanity ; I will shortly give medicines for your master's disease." " Now I will extirpate him by the roots ; wise persons do not slay messengers ; I therefore let you go. Better go and tell him what I say :—" Son of a buffalo ! If you are willing to fight, better come and do not delay.'' " O Enemy of horse ! (Buffaloes and horses are always at war with each other) Your strength is well known to me ; you are a grass eater and your appearance is stupid, idiotic ; out of your horns I will make a good bow.' " You depend on your horns for your strength;

that I well know. You are clever in striking with your horns ; you don't know anything about warfare ; therefore I will cut off your both the weapons and render you powerless. You are very much puffed up with vanity due to that.

22. Vyâsa said:—"Indra having spoken thus, the messenger quickly returned to his haughty master Mahiṣa, and saluting, spoke:—

23-28. The messenger said :—"Indra counts you not even a fig, as he is surrounded by his Deva forces and considers himself quite sufficient. It ought one's servant to speak true and pleasant before one's master ; how can I utter the words before my master, that are spoken by that brute Indra." Whereas the well known maxim reigns in my mind withal that I am your well-wishing servant and I ought to speak truth before you, my master, and that truth is to be pleasant to hear also. If pleasant words I speak only, then I fail in my duty; at the same time, harsh words ought not to be spoken by me, your sincere well-wisher. My Lord ! The cruel poison-like words that come from the mouth of an enemy, how can I, a servant of yours, utter those harsh sayings ! O Lord of the Earth! I will never be able to utter those rude sayings that Indra has spoken.

29-53. Vyâsa said:—"Hearing the messenger's words full of meaning, the grass-eater Mahiṣa Dânava got very angry and, waggling his tail behind his back, passed urine; then his eyes reddened with anger, he called the Dânavas before him and said:—" O Dânavas ! The Lord of the Devas is firmly resolved on battle; therefore collect your forces; we will have to conquer that devil, the chief of the Sûras. Who can stand for him as my rivâl here ! If hundreds and thousands of warriors like Indra come, I do not fear any of them at all; O Dânavas, we will thoroughly put an end to him. His heroism is before those only that are peaceful and quiet, before the ascetics that have become lean and thin by the penances; he is licentious and can only seduce other's wives by craftiness and arts. He is a thorough rogue and hypocrite, vicious and fault-finding; otherwise why does he put obstacles before others, depending for his strength only on the beauties of the Apsarâs or heavenly prostitutes. He is treachrous to his very core; therefore he, being afraid at the very outset, took oaths, and entered into agreement with the high-souled Namuchi; afterwards, when his time turned favourable, that villian broke his treaty and treacherously killed him." Again the powerful Viṣṇu is a thorough master of treachery and hypocrisy, the mine in taking oaths and can only show his vanity and is expert in that. He can assume many forms at will by his Mâgic power." For these very reasons Viṣṇu had to take the form of a boar and

kill Hiraṇyâkṣa; and again he had to take up a man-lion form to kill Hiraṇya Kas'ipu. O Dânavas! Never shall I surrender myself to Viṣṇu, for I never place my trust in the words or deeds of Viṣñu and his Devas. What can Indra or Viṣṇu do against me, when the most powerful Rudra is not able to fight against me in the battle-field! I will instantly defeat Indra, Varuṇa, Yama, Kuvera, Fire, Sun and Moon and get possession of their Heavens. On our conquering the Devas, we all shall get our share of Yajñas and we along with other Dânavas drink the Soma juice and enjoy ourselves in Heaven. O Dânavas! I have got the boon; what do I now care for the Devas. My death is not from men. too. What can a woman do to me? O my emissaries! Call without any delay the chief Dânavas from the nether regions and the mountains and make them my generals? O Dânavas! I can alone conquer all the Devas; only to make the war arrangements look nice, that I am taking you to defeat them. There is no fear of mine from the Devas, consequent on the boon conferred on me. I will kill them by my hoofs and horns. I am not to be killed by Suras, Asuras, as men; therefore get yourselves ready to conquer the Devas. O Dânavas! After conquering the Heavens we will be garlanded with Pârijâta wreaths and we will enjoy the Deva women in the Nandana Garden. We will drink the milk of the heavenly milching cow (the cow that yields all desires) and, intoxicated with the heavenly drinks, we will hear and see the music and singing the dancing of the Gandarbhas there. You will all be served there with various bottles of wine by Urvasî, Menakâ, Rambhâ, Ghritâchî, Tillottamâ, Pramadvarâ Mahâsenâ, Mis'ra Keṣî, Madotkatâ. Viprachitti and others. Then be all ready at once for this auspicious occasion to march to Heavens and fight there with the Suras. And be pleased to call that pure-souled Muni Śukrâchârya, the son of Bhrigu and the Guru of the Daityas and worship him and tell him to perform sacrificial ceremonies for the safety and victory of the Dânavas. O king! Thus, ordering the chief Dânavas, the wicked Mahiṣa went to his abode, with gladness.

Here ends the Third Chapter of the Fifth Book on the Daitya armies getting ready in Śrî Mad Devî Bhâgavatam, the Mahâpurâṇam by Maharsi Vedavyâsa of 18,000 verses.

CHAPTER IV.

1-17. Vyâsa said :—O King! The messenger of the Dânavas having departed, Indra, the lord of the Devas, Yama, Vâyu, Varuṇa, and Kuvera and other Devas, called an assembly and addressed thus: —"O Devas! the most powerful Mahiṣa, the son of Rambha, is now the king of the Dânavas; he is particularly expert in hundreds of Mâyâs (mâgic) and has become haughty on the strength of his boon." O Devas! Mahiṣa has sent his messenger; he wants to take possession of the heaven; he came down to me and spoke thus:—"O Indra! Quit your this heaven and go any where you like, or be ready to pay your homage to the highsouled Mahiṣâsura, the Lord of the Dânavas." The Dânava Chief never becomes angry with his opponent who becomes submissive like a servant; if you surrender and serve him, he will, out of mercy, grant an allowance to you. O Lord of the Devas! If this does not like you, then collect your forces and be ready for fight; no sooner I return, the Lord of the Dânavas will come here at once ready to give battle to you. Thus saying, the messenger of that wicked Dânava departed. Now what are we to do? O Devas! Think on that. O Devas! Even a weak enemy is not to be overlooked by a powerful opponent, especially when the enemy is powerful by his own powers and is ever energetic, never is he to be overlooked. It is always incumbent on us to make our efforts, as best as we can, both by our body and mind as far as lies in our power; the result, victory or defeat depends entirely on Fate. It is useless to make treaty with a deceitful and dishonest person; we therefore never should make treaty with this person; you are all honest; that Dânava is dishonest; therefore ponder and ponder deeply and ponder again; do you that which is proper. It is not advisable to go out at once for fight when we are unaware of our enemy's strength; let us therefore send spies truthful, honest, motiveless, quick, to ascertain their strength, those who can easily enter amongst our enemies and yet who have no relation, nor any interest with them. The arrangements of their forces, their movements, their numbers, they will ascertain correctly; who are their generals, what is their number and what is their strength, they will thoroughly examine and return here quickly. First, we will ascertain the strength of the forces of our opposite party and then we will decide at once whether we will start for battle or seek protection within forts. Wise persons always consider before they act; any act done rashly leads in all respects to many troubles, and anything done after mature

prejudgments leads to happiness; so the wise do. The Dânavas are all one in their heart and mind ; therefore it is not advisable, in any way to apply the principle of Bheda (sowing principles of discord). Let our spies go there, ascertain their strength, return and inform us; we will then judge what principle is proper and apply to the expert Dânavas. Any act done contrary to policy and expediency will undoubtedly produce effects contrary in every way just like a medicine which we have not tried already.

18-22. Vyâsa said :—O King ! Thus counselling with the Devas, Indra sent expert spies to ascertain the true state of affairs. The spies, too, went into the abode of the Daityas, with no delay and made their searches thoroughly into every nook and corner and returned and told Indra all the strength of the Dânava forces. Indra was very much startled to know, then, of their arrangements. He immediately bade all the Devas be ready for battle and called for his High priest Brihaspati, expert in giving advices and began to consult with him how to carry on the warfare with that indomitable enemy, the Lord of the Asuras. On Bhihaspati, the best and famous of the Angirâ family, taking his excellent seat,

23-25. Indra thus said :—"O Guru of the Devas ! O Learned ! Please say what are we to do now in this critical juncture ? You are omniscient; to-day you are our guide. The Demon Mahîṣa has become very powerful, very haughty ; surrounded by Dânavas he is now coming to fight with us. You are expert in mantras; find out the remedy for us. Śukrâchârya is the remover of all obstacles on their side; and that you are our safe guard is well known to us.

26. Vyâsa said :—Hearing these words of Indra, Brihaspati, who is always ready to effect the Deva's purposes, thought intently on the subject, said very shortly thus :

27-51. Brihaspati spoke :—O Lord of the Devas! O Venerable One ! Be peaceful; have patience; when a difficulty comes, one should not, all on a sudden, lose one's patience. O Chief of the Immortals ! Victory or defeat is completely under the control of destiny : therefore intelligent ones should always be patient. O Śatakratu ! What will unavoidably be done must come to pass; knowing this as certain, one would always be an enthusiast and exert one's powers. Everything is guided by Fate. Knowing this, the Munis devote themselves at all times solely filled with energy in their meditation and Yoga practices for their final liberation. Therefore, to show one's energy, according to the rules of the daily

practices, ought to be indespensably done ; and one should not repent or feel pleasure on failure or success ; for that is under Fate. Success sometimes comes without the exercise of one's own powers, as seen in cases of the lame and the blind ; and that is not the reason why one should be very glad. The embodied beings are all under Daiva (Fate) ; therefore even if success be not attained, though one's own powers are exercised thoroughly, no one is to blame for that. O Lord of the Suras ? What to say of forces, Mantras, or advices, what if chariots or weapons, nothing is to lead to success ; It is Daiva, and only Daiva that makes one successful. This whole universe is under Daiva ; it is, therefore, that we see powerful persons suffering pains, and weak ones getting happiness ; the intelligent ones sleeping without any food and fools enjoying merrily ; distressed persons getting victory and powerful ones suffering defeats ; what cares, then, ought one to entertain in this. O Lord of the Suras ! Whatever is inevitable to come to pass, be it success or failure, one will lead one's energies to that end ; therefore one needs to consider beforehand whether one's energies will be successful or not. In times of distress, one sees distress too much ; and in times of pleasure, one seeks pleasure too much ; one's self, therefore one should not surrender to one's enemies, pleasure and pain. Pain and suffering is not felt so much in patience as is felt when impatient ; therefore one must practise patience when pain or pleasure comes. Indeed, it is very difficult to bear oneself up in distress or happiness ; therefore wise persons try not to let these feelings crop up at all from the very beginning. "I am always full, undiminishable, I am beyond these Prâkritic qualities. Who is there to suffer ? What is suffering ? " Thus one ought to think at that moment. I am beyond the twenty-four Tattvas ; what pleasure or pain can, then, arise to me ? Hunger and thirst are the Dharma of Prâṇa ; pain and insensibility is the Dharma of mind, old age and death belong to this physical body. I am free from these six diseases ; I am Śiva. Grief and delusion are the qualities of this body ; what then do I care for them ? "I" am not the qualities of the body nor "I" am the soul pertaining to that. I am beyond the seven transfigurations, changes, *e. g.* Mahat, etc., I am beyond this Prakriti, Nature, and beyond the sixteen changes wrought out by Prakriti; I am therefore eternally happy, I am beyond Prakriti and its transformation, then why am I to suffer pain always ? O Lord of the Suras ! Think on these and be without any passion. O Śatakratu ! This attachment is the root of all miseries ; and non-attachment is the source of all happiness ; non-attachment, therefore, is the chief means of the extirpation of all your troubles. O Lord of Śachi ! Nothing can be happier than contentment. In case you do find it difficult to practise dispassion, apply, then, discrimination and

think of Fate, that what comes inevitably to pass. O Lord of the Suras ! Actions already done connot die out without their effects being enjoyed. O Best of the Suras ! Let all your intelligence be brought to action, let all the Devas lend their helping hands to you ; what is inevitable must come to pass ; what then can you care for your happiness or pain ? O King ! Happiness is felt for the expiation of good deeds and pain is felt for the expiation of bad deeds ; therefore wise persons get thoroughly delighted when their puṇya ends. O King ! Judge and hold a council to-day ; then try your best. But what is unavoidable will come to pass, even if you try your best.

Here ends the Fourth Chapter of the Fifth Book on the counsels given by Indra in the Mâhâ Purâṇam Srî Mad Devî Bhâgavatam of 18,000 verses by Maharṣi Veda Vyâsa.

CHAPTER V.

1-6. Vyâsa said:—The thousand-eyed Indra, hearing this, again asked to Brihaspati that he would make preparations for war against Mahisâsura. Without effort kingdoms are not attained; no —nor happiness, nor fame, nor anything; those who are weak, they extol effortlessness ; but the powerful never praise that. Knowledge is the ornament of the ascetics and contentment is the ornament of the Brâhmaṇas ; but those who desire lordship over powers, effort and prowess to destroy one's enemies are their excellent ornaments. O Muni! I will kill this Mahiṣâsura by my heroism as I had, of old, destroyed Vritra, Namuchi and Balâsura. You are the Deva Guru; therefore you and my thunderbolt are my strength. The immortal Hari and Hara also will help me in this. O Guru! Preserver of my honour and prestige ! Now recite the mantras calculated to remove all the obstacles towards my victory. I, too, am making preparations and raising up my own forces to wage up war against that Dânava Mahiṣa.

7-13. Vyâsa said:—On hearing Indra's words, Brihaspati smiled and said "O Lord of the Devas! I see you are bent on fight. I will neither stimulate you to fight nor shall I make you desist from the purpose. The issue is doubtful. There may be defeat or there may be victory. O Lord of Sachî! You are not to blame at all in this matter; what is written in the Book of Fate will come to pass, be it victory or defeat. I am not aware of the future in this respect. O Child! You know already what an amount of suffering I had to endure in times gone by when my wife had

been stolen. O Destroyer of the enemies! My wife had been stolen by Moon who turned out my enemy; living in my stage of an householder, I was put to all sort of miseries, deprived of all my happiness. O Lord of the Suras! I am renowned in all the worlds as a man of much wisdom and intelligence. Where then was my intelligence, when Moon carried away, perforce, my wife. O Lord of the Suras! To my mind, the success or failure depends entirely on destiny; yet intelligent ones should always resort to efforts and be energetic.

14-17. Vyâsa said:—O King! On hearing the words of Brihaspati, pregnant with truth, Indra went with him to Brahmâ, took his refuge and saluting him said:—O Grand Sire! The Dânava is collecting a big army, and wants to conquer and take possession of the Heavens. All the other Dânavas have enrolled themselves in the list of his army; they are eager to fight and they are all very powerful and skilled in arts of warfare. I am therefore very afraid and have come to you. You know everything; please help me in this matter.

18-20. Brahmâ said:—We all will go to-day to the Mount Kailâs'a and take Śankara with us and go to Viṣṇu. There all the Devas, assembled, will hold a council and consider the time and place, when it will be settled whether it is proper or not to fight. For one who dares to do any act without considering one's strength and without any judgment, certainly courts his own downfall.

21-35. Vyâsa said:—O King! Hearing this, Indra with the other Lokâpalas and Devas, headed by Brahmâ, went to Kailas'â. Then they came to Śankara and sang vedic hymns to him. Mahes'vara became very much pleased and they taking Him went to Vaikuṇṭha, the abode of Viṣṇu. Indra saluted Viṣṇu and sang hymns to him, and told him about his errand thus:—"Mahiṣa has become very haughty on account of the favour bestowed on him and therefore we are very afraid (and therefore ask your help to relieve us from this danger). Viṣṇu, then, hearing the cause of fear, told them:—"We all will fight and kill that Demon." Vyâsa said:—O king! Thus settling the question, Brahmâ, Viṣṇu, and Hari and Indra and the other Devas riding on their own Vâhanas (means of conveyance) respectively dispersed. While Brahmâ on his vehicle Swan, Viṣṇu on his Garuḍa, Śankara on his Bull, Indra on his elephant Airâvata, Kârtika on his peacock, and Yama, the god of death on his Vâhana, the Buffalo, were on the point of going with the other Deva forces, the army of the Dânava Mahiṣa met them on their way, all fully equipped with arms and weapons. A dreadful fight then ensued between the Devas and the Dânavas.

Arrows, axes, Prâsas, Musalas (clubs), Paras'us (pick axes), Gadâs (clubs), Pattis'as, Śûlas (tridents), chakras (discus) Śakti (weapons), Tomaras, Mudgaras, Bhindipâlas, Lângalas, and various other deadly weapons appeared on the scenes with which they fought against one another. The Commander-in-Chief of Mahiṣa, the very powerful Chikṣura, shot five sharp arrows at Indra. The ever-ready and light-handed Indra, too, with his arrows cut off all of them and struck at his heart heavily with his Ardhachandra (half moon) arrow. The Commander-in-Chief, struck by this arrow fell senseless on the back of his elephant. Indra, then struck the trunk of the elephant with his Vajra (thunderbolt); the elephant then severely struck with the Vajra fled away into the Dânava's forces. The Lord of the Dânavas seeing this, got very angry and addressed the general Viḍâla "O Hero ! You are very powerful ; go then and kill first that haughty Indra; then kill Varuṇa and other Devas and come back to me."

36-57. Vyâsa said :—The very powerful Asura Viḍâla, on receiving the order came up at once to Indra, mounted on a very furious elephant. Seeing him coming, Vâsava shot at him angrily with very terrible and most powerful arrows that looked like deadly snakes. But the Demon, too, cut off those arrows at once with his excellent arrows and quickly shot at Vâsava fifty arrows, sharpened on stones. Indra cut off all those and, being infuriated, shot again sharp deadly serpent-like arrows at him, and cutting, off again all his emenies' arrows by arrows discharged from his bow, struck the elephant's trunk with his Gadâ (club). The elephant, being thus struck on his head, cried aloud in a distressed tone and being afraid turned back, thus killing the Dânava forces as he fled away. The general Viḍâla, seeing the elephant fleeing away from the battle-field, mounted on a beautiful chariot and instantly appeared before the Devas to fight with them. Seeing the Dânava coming again on a chariot, Indra shot at him sharp arrows after arrows like venomous snakes. The powerful Dânava, too, infuriated hurled at him terrible arrows; then a sharp conflict ensued between Vâsava and the Dânava. Finding the Dânava powerful, Vâsava's senses were confounded with anger; he then took his son Jayanta before him and began to fight. Jayanta stretched his bow tight and shot at the breast of the Dânava swelled with pride, five sharp arrows with his full strength. Thus shot at by the network of arrows, the Dânava fell unconscious on the chariot; the charioteer then fled away with his chariot from the battle-field. Thus on the Dânava Viḍâla becoming unconscious and being taken away from the field, the Dunduvis (drums) of the Devas were resounded and great acclamations

of "Victory to the Devas" were heard. The Devas were very glad and sounded hymns before Indra; the Gandarbhas began to sing and the Apsarâs began to dance. O king! Hearing the loud acclamations of victory to the Devas, Mahiṣa became very angry and ordered the Dânava Tâmra, the destroyer of enemy's pride, to go to the battle-field. Tâmra appeared in the battle, and, coming face to face with many Deva warriors, hurled on them showers of arrows. Varuṇa appeared with his Pâs'a weapon and Yama, mounted on his buffalo, appeared with his Daṇḍa (staff). A terrible fight then ensued between the Devas and Danavas and the weapons, arrows, axes, Muṣalas, Śaktis and Paras'uṣ glittered in the fields. Yama raising his Daṇḍa with his hands struck at Tâmra; but the powerful Tâmra, though severely struck, was not at all moved and remained firm in his place in the field. On the other hand, Tâmra, violently drawing his bow, hurled a mass of sharp arrows at Indra and the other Devas. The Devas got angry and shot at the Dânavas multitudes of divine arrows sharpened on stone, and frequently called aloud "Wait, wait." The Dânava Tâmra thus shot at by the arrows of the Devas, fell unconscious in the battle-field; the Dânava forces got afraid and a cry of universal consternation and distress arose.

Here ends the Fifth Chapter of the Fifth Skandha on the defeat of the Dânava forces of Mahiṣa in the Mâhâpurâṇam Śrî Mad Devî Bhâgavatam of 18,000 verses.

CHAPTER VI.

1-8. Vyâsa said:—O King! On the Daitya Tâmra becoming unconscious, Mahiṣa became very angry and, raising his Gadâ (club), came up before the Devas and said :—" Devas ! O Ye powerless like crows ; wait ; with one stroke of Gadâ, I will kill you." Thus saying, the powerful Mahiṣa swelled with pride, seeing Indra before him mounted on his elephant, instantly struck him on his arms. Indra, again lost no time, and struck violently with his thunderbolt and cut the Dânava's Gadâ into pieces, and came up very close, wanting to strike at him. Mahiṣa, too, becoming very angry took up his lustrous sword and came to Indra to attack him with this weapon. A fight then occurred between the two, terrible to all the Lokas and wonderful to the Munis, where various weapons were showered from both the sides. The Demon Mahiṣa spread then his Śâmvarî Mâyâ, destructive to all the worlds and fascinating to the Munis,

Hundreds and hundreds of powerful buffalo-like appearances resembling Mahiṣa became, then, visible on the battle-field ; they all began to kill the Deva forces with weapons in their hands.

9-14. Seeing this majic of the Dânava, Indra became thunderstruck and very much confounded with terror. Varuṇa, Kuvera, the Lord of wealth, Yama, Fire, Moon, Sun, and other Devas all fled with terror. Indra then, being surrounded by the network of majic, began to call Brahmâ, Viṣṇu and Mahes'a in his mind. At the instant when they were called in mind, Brahmâ, Viṣṇu and Maheṣa riding on respective conveyances Swan, Garuḍa, and Bull, came up there with best weapons in their hands for Indra's protection. Viṣṇu seeing the play of that fascinating majic hurled his bright discus, Sudars'an ; and caused the majic to vanish at once. Seeing the three, the Creator, the Preserver, and the Destroyer, the Dânava Mahiṣa came up there with his Parigha (a club tipped with iron) weapon, desirous to fight with them.

15-16. Then the general Chikṣura, Ugrâsya, Ugravîrya, Asilomâ, Trinetra, Vâskala, Andhaka and other warriors came up to fight.

17-23. Those proud Dânavas, clad in armour and mounted on chariots with bows in their hands besieged the Devas, like a tiger attacking an heifer. Then those Dânavas swelled with pride began to shower on arrows after arrows; the Devas, too, began to do the same, desiring to extirpate them. The General Andhaka, coming up to Hari, drew his bow with great force up to his ear and shot at him five sharp arrows tipped with poison. Vâsudeva, the Destroyer of the enemies, cut off those arrows no sooner they came up before him ; and He shot at the Dânavas five arrows. Then Hari and the Dânava struck each other with various weapons and arrows, swords, discus, Muṣala, clubs, S'akti, and Paras'u. Here, on the other hand, the fight lasted for fifty days between Mahes'a versus Andhaka; and it was a very close conflict, causing horripilation. Thus severe fights ensued between Vâskala and Indra, Mahiṣa and Rudra, Trinetra and Yama, Mahâ Hanu and Kuvera, Asilomâ and Varuṇa.

24-39. The Dânava Mahiṣa struck Garuḍa, the conveyance of Hari, with his club; Garuḍa, being very much distressed with the blow, sat down, gasping. Viṣṇu then comforted the powerful Garuḍa, the son of Vinatâ and made him calm and quiet. Wanting to kill Andhaka, Janârdana became infuriated, and, drawing his bow made of horn, call Śârnga, shot at him arrows after arrows. The Dânava cut off all those arrows to pieces with his own mass of arrows. Then, becoming very angry, he shot fifty sharp arrows at Hari. Vâsudeva quickly made all those arrows useless

and hurled Sudars'ana Chakra with thousand spokes on the Dânava with great violence. Andhaka thwarted this with his own discus and shouted aloud with such a great force that all the Devas became confused and confounded. Viṣṇu's chakra being baffled, the Devas became distressed with grief and the Dânavas got elated. Seeing the Devas thus grieved, Viṣṇu held aloft his Kaumodakî Gadâ (club) and came hurriedly before the Dânava. Hari struck then with his Gadâ on the Dânava's head, whereon he fell senseless on the ground. The hot-tempered Mahiṣa, seeing Andhaka senseless, bellowed aloud and, terrifying Hari, came up there. Seeing him there, Vâsudeva made such a thundering noise with his bow-string that the Devas became highly glad. Then the bhagavân shot showers of arrows on Mahiṣa; and Mahiṣa, too, cut those arrows while they were seen in the air. O king! Then a very close fight ensued between the two. Kes'ava struck on the head of the Dânava with his club. Thus struck, he fell in a swoon on the ground and a general cry of distress arose amongst the Dânavas. In a moment the Dânava got up again, free from trouble; he then struck again on Viṣṇu's head with his Parigha (a club mounted with iron, a mace). Struck by that mace, Janârdan lay senseless; Garuḍa, seeing him thus unconscious, immediately took him away from the battle field.

40-55. When Viṣṇu thus fled, Indra and the Devas were much distressed with fear and began to cry aloud. Hearing the Devas cry, S'ankara became wrathful and, quickly coming before Mahiṣa, struck him with his trident (Śûla). The wicked Mahiṣa made his weapon ineffectual and bellowed aloud and struck on the breast of Śankara with his S'akti (a kind of missile). Thus wounded in his breast S'ankara did not feel any pain; rather, with his eyes red with anger, He struck him again with Trisûla. Seeing Śankara engaged with Mahiṣa, Hari becoming conscious came again on the battle-field. Seeing the two powerful Deva chiefs, Hari and Hara, in the battle-field Mahiṣa became very much angry; he then assumed a buffalo body and wagging his big tail to and fro came in front of them with a desire to fight. That terrible Mahiṣa of a huge body shook his horns and bellowed so deep like a thunder cloud that even the Devas got frightened. He began to hurl the huge mountain peaks with his two horns. The two powerful Devas Hari and Hara, began to shoot at the Dânava deadly arrows after arrows. Seeing these two gods shower arrows upon him, Mahiṣa began to hurl mountains on them by his tail. Viṣṇu cut off those mountains into hundred pieces by his arrows and struck at him instantly with his Chakra. Struck thus by Chakra, the Lord of the Dânavas fainted, but he instantly rose up with a human body. The mountain-like terrible Dânava with

a club in his hand frightened the Devas and uttered grave sounds like those of rumbling rain clouds. Hearing that, the Bhagavân Viṣṇu sounded a more terrible sound with his Pañchajanya Ś'aṅkha (conchshell). Hearing the sound of that conchshell, the Dânavas were struck with terror and the ascetic Riṣis and Devas became exalted with joy.

Here ends the Sixth Chapter of the Fifth Skandha on the Deva Dânava fight in Śrî Mad Devî Bhâgvatam, the Mahâ Purâṇam, of 18,000 versus by Maharṣi Veda Vyâsa.

CHAPTER VII.

1-3. Vyâsa said :—O King! Mahiṣa, seeing the Dânavas afflicted with grief, quitted his buffalo appearance, assumed a lion form and spreading his long mains began to roar aloud and fell amidst the Deva forces; then the Devas were terrified on seeing his sharp nails. That lion-form Mahiṣa first attacked so severely the Garuḍa with his nails, that his whole body was besmeared with blood; then he attacked Viṣṇu's arms with his nails.

4-11. Seeing the Dânava, Vâsudeva Hari raised his discus in anger and attacked him with great force to kill him. Just when Hari struck the Dânava violently with his Chakra, the powerful Dânava quitted immedately his lion-form, assumed the buffalo form and struck Hari with his two horns. Vâsudeva, thus pierced in his breast with the horns, became confounded and fled away as best as he could till he reached his own abode, Vaikuṇṭha. Seeing Hari thus fleeing away, Śankra, too, thought him invulnerable and fled to his Kailâs'a mountain with fear. Brahmâ, too, fled to his own abode with terror; but the powerful Vâsava took patience and remained steady in the battle. Varuṇa taking his Śakti waited patiently for battle. Yama, too, with his staff remained there ready to fight. Kuvera, the Lord of the Yakṣas, remained very busy in close fighting with the Dânavas; Fire, taking Sakti, also waited. The Sun and Moon, the Lord of the stars, both remained in firm resolve to fight with Mahiṣa, the lord of the Dânavas.

12-22. O King! In the meanwhile, the Dânava forces got angry and attacked them on all sides, shooting at the enemies a mass of dangerous serpent-like arrows. The Lord of the Dânavas, Mahiṣa, too, assuming the buffalo appearance, reigned supreme in the middle. At this moment fierce sounds of the warriors on both the sides were heard. During the

sharp contest of the Devas and Dânavas, the sounds from the bowstrings and the clappings of the hands were heard like the roarings of thunder. The powerful Dânava, then swelled with pride, began to hurl the mountain tops with his horns, thus killing the Deva forces. Some by hoofs and some by the lashing of the tail, that angry Mahiṣa, very wonderful to behold, sent to the region of Death. Then the Devas and Gandarbhas became very much frightened; so much so, that Indra fled away at once on the sight of Mahiṣa. Indra thus retreating from the field, Yama, Kuvera, and Varuṇa all quitted the battle-ground with fear. Indra fled away quitting his Airâvata elephant and Uchchais'ravâ horse ; so Mahiṣa got the possession of the elephant and the horse, as well the heavenly cow of the Sun. So the Dânavas considered themselves pre-eminently victorious and returned to their abodes. Next they wanted to go, as early as possible, to the Heavens, with all their forces. In no time Mahiṣa went to the abode of Indra, deserted by all the terror-stricken Devas and got the possession thereof. Then taking his seat on the beautiful throne of Indra, he made the other Dânavas occupy the several seats of the other Devas.

23-27. Thus fighting full one hundred years, the Dânava Mahiṣa, puffed up with pride, acquired the seat of Indra, his desired object. He banished the Devas from the Heavens; the Devas, thus tormented, began to wander in the caves of hills and dales for a period of good many years. O King! The Devas, at last, were quite tired and took the four-faced Brahmâ, the Creator's refuge. At that instant, the Lord of the world, the Rajas incarnate, the Originator of the Vedas, was seated on His lotus seat ; surrounding Him were standing his mortal sons Marîchi, etc., with their passions subdued, mind calm and beyond the sphere of the Vedas and Vedângas; there were there also Siddhas, Gandarbhas, Kinnaras, Châraṇas, Uragas, and Pannagas, The terrified Devas then began to praise and chant hymns to Brahmâ, the Lord of the world.

28-33. The Devas said :—" O Creator ! O Lotus-born ! O Thou, the Remover of the pains and afflictions of all this world ! How is it that you are not moved with pity towards the Devas, seeing that we are defeated by the lord of the Dânavas and have been banished from our abode ; what more shall we say, our troubles are now indescribable, as we are living in the caves of hills and dales. O Creator ! A son may be a hundred times guilty of offence ; is it, then, that the father, devoid of any feeling of covetousness, deserts his sons and gives them trouble ! We are oppressed by the Dânvaas, we who are wholly devoted to your lotus-feet, why are you to-day showing signs of indifference towards us ! That wicked Dânava is thoroughly enjoying to-day the Heavens of the Devas, is forcibly taking their share of the oblations of clarified butter in the Yajñas (sacrifices)

from the Brâhmaṇas; is enjoying thr Pârijâta tree and also the heavenly milching cow, the jewel of the ocean. What more shall we describe to you the strange doings of the Asuras ; O Lord of the Devas ! You are perfectly aware of all that they strive and execute ; for, by your knowledge, you know everything of this world ; therefore, O Lord ! We lie prostrate at your feet. That vicious Dânava, of wicked character and full of mischievous actions, gives us troubles in various ways wherever we go ; O Lord of the Devas ! Thou art our only Protector ; therefore, O Lord ! Do what is good to us. Thou art the Awarder of the desires of the Devas. Thou art the First Creator of the world, and Preserver ; therefore if Thou dost not do us our good, to whom else shall we take refuge, when we are so severely oppressed as if we are burnt in a forest conflagration ! Who else is more lustrous, more beneficent and more-peace-giving Governor ?

34-35. Vyâsa said :—O king ! All the Devas, praising Him thus, bowed down to the Lord of creation with folded hands and saluted him, with their faces very heavy, overladen with deep sorrow. The Grand Sire of all the Lokas, seeing the plight of the Devas, consoled them with sweet words and made them happy.

36-43. O Suras ! What shal! I do ? The Dânava has become exceedingly haughty on account of his getting boons ; he can be killed by females only ; He is invunerable by any male' What remedy is there now ? Therefore, O Suras ! Let us all go to Kailâsâ, the best of all the mountains; thence we will take Śankara, the expert in doing the works of Gods, and go to Vaikuṇṭha, where Viṣṇu, the Deva of the Devas resides. There we all will unite and hold a counsel and decide what is best to do, to serve the purpose of the gods. Thus making out the programme, Brahmâ riding on his Hamsa went to Kailâsa, accompanied by all the Devas. At the same time Śiva came to know out of his introspection about the coming of Brahmâ and the other Devas and soon came out of his dwelling abode. When they met each other, they saluted each other and felt very glad. The Devas then bowed down to them. Seats were given to the Devas ; and when they sat respectively on their Âsanas, the Lord of Pârvatî also took his own seat. Śiva asked the welfare of Brahmâ and the Devas and asked the reasons of their coming to Kailâsa.

44. O Brahmâ ! What has caused you to come here along with Indra and the other Devas ? O highly fortunate one ! Please mention it.

45-47. Brahmâ said :—O Deva of the Devas ! The Dânava Mahiṣa is oppressing all the Devas in the Heavens ; they therefore terrified are wandering hither and thither in the caves and hills with Indra. Mahiṣa

and the other Dânavas are now accepting their share of Yajñas ; the Lokopâlas, being oppressed, have come to-day and are now taking shelter of Thee. O Śambhu ! Considering the situation serious, I have taken them with me here ; therefore, O Deva, do that which is reasonable and by which the purpose of the Devas can be carried out. O Bhûta Bhâvana! (The creator of the world) The whole charge and responsibility of all the Devas devolves on Thee.

48. Vyâsa said :—O King ! Hearing thus, Śankara smiled a little and spoke charming words to the Lotus-born in the following manner :—

49-55. O Bibhu ! It is You that gave before this boon to Mahiṣa; and therefore it is you that have wrought this mischief; The Dânava has become so strong a hero that he has caused terror to all the Devas even. Now where can we get such a noble woman who becomes able to kill that Dânava, elated with pride. My wife nor your wife ought to go to battle ; even if they, the good ladies go, how will they be able to fight ? The fortunate wife of Indra, too, is not expert in the art of warfare ; where else there is another lady who can kill this demon, blinded with pride. I, therefore, propose this ; let us all go to-day to Viṣṇu and, praising him with hymns, engage him quickly to this cause of the gods. Viṣṇu is foremost amongst the intelligent; therefore it is highly advisable to execute all actions after duly consulting with him. He, by dint of his high intelligence, will find out means and effect our purpose.

Vyâsa said :—O King ! Brahmâ and the other Devas heard Rudra and approved heartily and saying, "Be it so" instantly rose up. At the time, seeing all the auspicious signs concerning the success of the gods, they all became glad ; and, riding on their respective vehicles, drove towards the abode of Viṣṇu. Favourable fragrant winds, pleasant to touch, began to blow gently, birds began to chant hymns of praise and signs of success were seen all along their way. The sky was clear and the quarters became free; in short, everything showed favourable all along their way.

Here ends the Seventh Chapter on the going of the Devas to Kailâsa in the Fifth Skandha of Śrî Mad Devî Bhâgavatam, the Mahâ Purâṇam of 18,000 verses by Maharṣi Veda Vyâsa.

CHAPTER VIII.

1-4. Vyâsa said :—Soon the Devas reached Vaikuṇṭha, protected by Viṣṇu ; they at once began to look at the exquisite indescribable beauty of the place. At intervals they saw nice lovely divine houses, shining and appearing very splendid ; pools and lakes were seen in front of them beautified with Kalhâra lotus flowers. They began to see, at other places, rivers flowing; swans, cranes, Chakravâkas and other aquatic birds were swimming there easily and warbling lovely sounds. At other places again, beautiful gardens came to their sight adorned exquisitely by Champaka, As'oka, Mandâra, Bakula, Âmrâtaka, Tilaka, Kuruvaka and Mallikâ and various other flower trees, the cuckoos were seen there cooing melodiously, bees humming gently and peacocks dancing beautifully.

5-6. In the centre was situated the golden palace of Hari, towering to heavens, the rooms and quadrangles were all charming ; at places, they were bedecked with gems and jewels and adorned with various paintings. There was the Divine Seat in the centre, composed wholly of gems and jewels; and Viṣṇu was occupying this place. There were Viṣṇu's Pâriṣadas or attendants, Sunanda, Nandana, and others ; they were so much devoted to their master that there hearts never become attached to any other thing ; so they were devotedly singing His praises and chanting His hymns with undivided attention.

7-10. There were dancing the Apsarâs (celestial nymphs) and the Devas, Gandarbhas, and Kinnaras were singing in melodious tunes. Those who love the chanting of the Vedas, such calm-tempered Munis were reciting the Vedic Sûktas and thus highly extolled Him. The two lovely gate-keepers Jaya and Vijaya were waiting at the entrance gate with golden sticks in their hands ; the Devas coming nigh the city of Viṣṇu caught sight of them and said :—" Any of you may go and inform Viṣṇu that Brahmâ, Rudra, and the whole host of gods are waiting at His door to see Him."

11. Vyâsa said :—O king ! Hearing their words, Vijaya went away at once to Viṣṇu ; and, saluting Him, informed Him of the arrival of the Devas.

12-13. Vijaya said :—O Lord ! Thou destroyest the enemies of the gods ; hence Thou art the most worshipped of them. O Lord of Ramâ ! The whole hosts of gods have come and are waiting at Thy door. O Bibhu !

Brahmâ, Rudra, Indra, Varuṇa, Fire and Yama and other gods, anxious to see Thee, are all praising Thee by proper hymns.

14-32. Vyâsa said:—Hearing Vijaya's words, Viṣṇu, the Lord of Ramâ became very anxious and soon went out of his room to see the Devas. Hari came up to them and seeing the Devas waiting at the doors very morose and tired, cheered them up by casting a favourable glance full of affection and love. The gods bowed down and praised hymns to Jagannâtha the Deva of the Devas, the enemy of the Daityas and revealed in the Vedas. O Deva of the Devas! Thou art the Creator, Preserver, and the Destroyer of the worlds; Thou art the ocean of mercy and the sole refuge of this Universe; O Lord! We have come to Thee as our Great Refuge; therefore dost Thou save us from the present difficulty. Thus praised by the gods, Viṣṇu said:—O Immortals! Take your respective seats and speak how are you all? Why have you all in a body come here? Why are you so much depressed and worn out with cares? Why do you look so melancholy? Say soon for what purpose you with Brahmâ and Rudra have come here. The Devas said:—"O Lord! The Asura Mahiṣa is very cruel and wicked; always addicted to vicious acts; now that most sinful Dânava has become very much puffed up with pride and is tormenting us always." What more shall we say than this, he is appropriating to himself the share of the Yajñas performed by the Brâhmiṇs; we are, therefore, terror-stricken and are wandering in mountains and fastnesses. O Destroyer of Madhu! He has become unconquerable due to his being granted the boon; considering, therefore, the gravity of our situation we have taken refuge unto Thee. O Kriṣṇa! Thou art acquainted with all the tricks and Mâyâ of the Daityas; therefore Thou art capable to kill them. Therefore Thou alone art able to deliver us from the present difficulty; be pleased, therefore; to devise means for that purpose. The Creator Brahmâ has granted him this boon that the demon could not be killed by any man; therefore we are asking you where can we get a female who will be able to kill that hypocrite in battle. Mahiṣa has turned out very wicked on the strength of that boon; say, therefore, who amongst Umâ, Lakṣmî, Śachî, or Vidyâ or any other woman will be able to kill him. Therefore, O Gracious One to faithful worshippers and attendants! Thou art the Preserver of this world; now devise specially the cause of his death and carry out the purpose of the gods. Vyâsa said:—"O king! Viṣṇu, on hearing their words, spoke smiling "we fought before; but this Asura could not at that time be killed. Hence if some beautiful female Deity be now created out of the collective energy and form of the Śaktis of each of the Devas, then that Lady would be able easily to destroy that Demon

by sheer force. The Lady Deity then sprung from the collective energy of ours, would at once be able to destroy that Mahiṣa, elated on his getting the power, though he is skilled in hundreds of Mâyâs (mâgics). Therefore ask ye now all, with your wives respectively, boons from that portion which resides in you all in the form of Fiery Energy, that the collected energy thus manifested may assume the form of a Lady. We will then offer unto Her, all the Divine weapons, the trident, etc., that belong to us. That Deity, then, full of energy and with all the weapons in Her hands would kill that wicked Demon, vicious and swelled with vanity.

33-46 Vyâsa said:—On Viṣṇu, the Lord of the Devas, saying thus, came out spontaneously, at once, of the face of Brahmâ, the brilliant fiery energy, very difficult to conceive. That energy looked red like gems and pearls, hot, at the same time, a little cool, having a beautiful form, and encircled by a halo of light. O King! The high-souled Hari and Hara, of mighty valor, were astonished to see this Fire, emitted from Brahmâ. Next came out of the body of Śankara, His fiery spirit, quite in abundance and very wonderful to behold; it was silvery white, terrible, unbearable, and incapable of being seen even with difficulty. It extended like a mountain and looked horrible as if the incarnation of the Tamo Guṇa like another Tamo Guṇa (Śiva is the incarnation of Tamo Guṇa that destroys everything). It was very surprising to the Devas and very fearful to the Daityas. Next a dazzling light of blue colour emanated from the body of Viṣṇu. The light that came out of the body of Indra was hardly bearable, of a beautiful variegated colour, and comprised in itself the three qualities. Thus masses of lights came out respectively from Kuvera, Yama, Fire and Varuṇa. The other Devas, too, gave their shares of fiery lights, very lustrous and splendid. Then these all united into a great Mass of Fire and Light. Like another Himâlayan mountain shone full their lustrous Divine light; Viṣṇu and the other Devas were all extremely surprised to see this. While the Devas were thus looking steadfastly on that Fire, an exquisitely handsome Lady was born out of it, causing excitement and wonder to all. This Lady was Mahâ Lakṣmî; composed of the three qualities, of the three colours, beautiful, and fascinating to the universe. Her face was white, eyes were black, her lips were red and the palms of her hands were copper-red. She was adorned with divine ornaments. The Goddess was now manifest with eighteen hands, though She had a thousand hands (in Her unmanifested state). Now She became manifest out of the mass of fire, for the destruction of the Asuras.

47-52. Janamejaya said :—O Best of the Munis! O Krisna! You are highly fortunate and you are all-knowing. Kindly describe, in detail, the birth of Her body. O Deva! Please say whether the energies of all the gods united into one or remained separate? Whether Her body and Her limbs were all luminous. Was it that Her face, nose, eyes, etc., and all other parts of Her body were created out of the different fires respectively or whether was it that those limbs were fashioned when the different fires blended into one huge mass? Describe, in detail, the origin of the body and the several limbs thereof; also inform me the limbs that were produced out of the corresponding Deva's fiery part; as well tell me the several ornaments and several weapons given by the several Devas respectively. I am very desirous to hear all these from your lotus-like mouth. O Brâhmaṇ! Hearing from your lotus-like mouth the life and doings of Mahâ Lakṣmî, the sweet juice as they are, I am as yet not satiated (and am desirous to hear more).

53. Sûta said:—Veda Vyâsa, the son of Satyavatî, hearing his words addressed him in the following sweet words:—

54. "O Best of Kuras! Very fortunate you are. I will describe in detail, to the best of my understanding, the origin of Her body.

55. Even Brahmâ, Viṣṇu, Maheṣa and Indra are never competent enough to describe Her form properly.

56. As I already told you that She sprung at the instant the word was spoken, how then can I ascertain the form or likeness of the Devî.

57. She is constant, She is always existent; though She is one, yet She assumes different forms for the fulfilment of the Deva's ends, whenever their positions become serious.

58-59. Though the actor is one, yet for the entertainment of the spectators, he assumes different forms in the stage, so the Nirgunâ Devî, though formless, assumes in Her pastime, many different forms of Sâtvic, Râjasic or Tâmasic qualities, to fulfill the Deva's purposes.

60. There are various names given to Her, according as the works done by Her vary immensely in their natures, just as the meanings of one root vary, some being principal and some secondary, according to the meanings and objects they convey.

61. O King! I will now describe to you. as far as my knowledge goes, the Excellent Form that came out of that mass of Celestial Light.

62. Her grand beautiful white lotus-like face was created out of the fiery energy of Śankara.

63. Her glossy black beautiful hairs of the head, overhanging to the knees, were formed out of the light of Yama; these all came to a fine pointed end.

64. Her three eyes came out of the energy of Fire ; the pupils of those eyes were of a black colour ; the middle parts were of a white colour and the ends were red.

65. The two eyebrows of the Devî were black and came out of the spirit of Sandhyâ (twilights); they were nicely curved and were looking spirited, like the bow of the Cupid and they were shedding, as it were, cooling rays.

66. From the light of Vâyu (air), Her two ears were created ; they were not very long, nor very short, beautiful like the swinging seat (rocking chair) of the God of Love.

67. Her nose was fashioned out of the fire of Kuvera, the Lord of wealth ; it looked like the til flower, glassy and exquisitely charming.

68. O King ! Her pointed rows of glossy and brilliant teeth, looking like gems, came out of the energy of Dakṣa ; they looked like the Kunda flowers.

69. Her lower lip was deep red and it came out of the fire of Aruṇa (the charioteer of the Sun) ; Her beautiful upper lip came out of the energy of Kârtika.

70. Her eighteen hands came out of the Tejas of Viṣṇu and Her red fingers came out of the Tejas of the Vasus.

71. Her breasts came out of the energy of Soma and Her middle (navel) with three folds was created out of the spirit of Indra.

72. Her thighs and legs were from Varuṇa and Her spacious loins came out from Earth.

73-74. O King ! Thus from the various Tejas, contributed by the Devas, that Heavenly Lady came out. Her body and the several parts thereof were beautiful ; Her form was incomparably graceful and the voice was exquisitely sonorous and lovely. The Devas, oppressed by Mahiṣâsura, became overpowered with joy seeing this well decorated Devî, having beautiful eyes and teeth, and charming in all respects.

75. Viṣṇu then addressed all the Devas to give all their auspicious ornaments and weapons, He said :—"O Devas ! Better give, all of you the various arms and weapons, endowed with strength, created out of your own weapons and give them all to day to the Devî.

Here ends the Eighth Chapter of the Fifth Skandha on the description of the origin and the form of the Devî in Śrîmad Devî Bhâgavatam, the Mahâ Purâṇam, of 18,000 verses by Maharṣi Veda Vyâsa.

CHAPTER IX.

1-22. Vyâsa said :—On hearing Viṣṇu's words, the Devas became very glad and presented immediately their own weapons, ornaments and clothings. The Kṣiroda (Milk) Ocean presented to Her gladly, the well fitted necklace, clear as crystal, and a pair of divine cloths, of a red colour, never becoming old and very fine. Vis'vakarmâ was very much gratified in his heart and presented a divine jewel to be worn in Her diadem or crest, blazing like hundreds of suns; white ear-rings ; bracelets for Her wrist, bracelets for Her upper arm, and other bracelets decked with various gems and jewels and anklets brilliant like gems, of a clear Sun-like lustre, decked with jewels, and tinkling nicely. The architect of the gods, the ocean of intellect, Viśvakarmâ gave Her as offerings beautiful ornaments also for the neck, all very beautiful, as well as for the fingers decked with gems and jewels, all shining splendidly. Varuṇa gave for Her head a garland of lotuses, never fading away, of such a sweet fragrance as bees constantly hover round them and the Vaijayantî garland for Her breast. The mountain Himâlyâ gladly offered Her various gems and a beautiful lion, of a golden colour for Her conveyance. Then that beautiful Lady, having all the auspicious signs, wishing welfare to all, and decorated with the divine ornaments began to look grand and splendid, mounted on Her conveyance, the Lion. Viṣṇu then created another thousand spoked discus (Chakram) from His own Chakra, capable to take off the head of any Asura, and offered it to Her. Saṅkara created another excellent Tris'ûla from his own Trident, terrible and demon-killing, and offered it to the Devî. Varuṇa created another bright conch from his own conch and offered it gladly to the Devî. Fire offered Her a weapon named Śataghni which kills violently the demons, as if that is another god of death. Maruta (wind), the chief of the gods, offered Her a wonderful bow and an arrow case filled with arrows. The bow can be drawn with great difficulty and emits a very harsh sound. Indra created another dreadful thunderbolt from his own thunderbolt and gave it at once to the Devî; as well the beautiful sonorous bell that used to hang from the elephant

Airâvata. Yama, the God of Death, created another beautiful staff from his own sceptre which takes away when time comes, the life of all beings. Brahmâ gladly gave Her a divine Kamandalu, filled with the Ganges water; and Varuṇa offered Her a weapon called Pâs'a. O King! Time gave Her an axe and a shield and Vis'vakarmâ gave Her a sharp Paras'u. Kuvera, the Lord of wealth, gave her a golden drinking cup, filled with wine; and Vâruṇa offered Her a divine beautiful lotus. Vis'vakarmâ became very glad and gave Her the Kaumodakî gadâ, capable to kill the enemy of the gods and whence hundreds of bells are hanging, an impenetrable armour' and various other weapons. The Sun gave to the Divine Mother his own rays. The Devas, seeing Her adorned with ornaments and weapons, began to praise and chant hymns to that most Auspicious Goddess, the Great Enchantress of the three worlds.

23-29. The Devas said :—"Salutation to Śivâ, Salutation to the Most Auspicious; Thou art peace and nourishment; we salute again and again to Thee. Salutation to Thee. the Bhagvatî Devî; Thou art the Goddess Rudrâṇî (the terrible), we always salute again and again to Thee. Thou art the Kâlarâtri (the night of destruction at the end of the world); Thou art the Indrâṇî. Thou art the Mother, we salute again and again to Thee; Thou art the success, Thou art the the intelligence, Thou art the growth, Thou art the Vaiṣṇavî; salutation again and again to Thee. Thou art within the earth; yet the earth does not know Thee. Thou art again the inmost of the earth and controllest the things within this earth; we offer our salutations to that Supreme Cause, the Highest Goddess. Thou art within this Mâyâ (the unborn) yet the Mâyâ does not know Thee. Thou residest again within the innermost of the Mâyâ and directest that Unborn One, the Mâyâ, we salute again and again to that Supreme Cause, the Great Directress, the Śivâ (the most auspicious). O Mother! Do what is good to us; we are oppressed by our enemy, dost thou protect us; by Thy own power dost Thou overpower and kill that Mahiṣa. That demon is vulnerable by woman only; he is deceitful, cunning, dreadful, and swollen with pride on his having got the blessing; he assumes many forms and torments the Devas. O One, devoted to the Bhaktas! Thou art the only refuge of all the gods; O Thou art the supreme goddess, we are very much harassed and oppressed by the Dânava; therefore dost Thou now protect us; we bow down to Thee.

30. Vyâsa said :—When the Devas had praised thus, the Highest Goddess, the Giver of all happiness, then smilingly said in the following auspicious terms :—

31. " O Devas ! To-day in the battle ground I will overpower that wicked Mahiṣa, of cruel disposition and take away his life."

32-48. Vyâsa said :—Speaking thus in a melodious voice, the Supreme One smiled and again said :—" This world is all full of error and delusion. Really, it is very wonderful that Brahmâ, Viṣṇu, Mahes a, Indra and other gods are all shuddering out of fear from Mahiṣa Dânava. The power of Destiny is exceedingly great and terrible ; its influence cannot be overcome even by the best of the Devas. O king ! The Time is the Lord of happiness and pain ; Time is, therefore, the God. The wonder is this that even those who can create, preserve and destroy this world, they are being overpowered and tormented by Mahiṣa. The Devî, thinking thus, smiled ; then laughed and laughed very hoarsely ; it seemed that a roar of laughter then arose. And the Dânavas were struck with terror at that very dreadful sound. The earth trembled at that extraordinary sound ; the mountains began to move and the vast oceans that remained calm began to be agitated with billows. The uproar filled all the quarters and the mountain Meru trembled. Then the Dânavas, hearing the tumultuous uproar, were all filled with tremendous fear. The Devas became very glad and said thus :—" O Devî ! Let victory be Yours ; save us. The intoxicated Mahiṣa, too, hearing those words, became very angry. Mahiṣa, struck with terror at those words, asked the Daityas " O Messengers ! Go and ascertain how has orignated this sound.

41-48. Who has made this harsh sound ? Bring that devil who has made this hoarse noise, be he a Deva, Dânava, or anyone else unto me, and I will kill that roaring villain, who, it seems, has been puffed with egoism and vanity. The Devas are not making this noise, for they are vanquished and terror-stricken ; The Âsuras are not doing so, for they are my subjects ; then, who is the stupid fellow that has done so ? Surely he is of very little understanding ; his days are numbered ; and I will carry him to the home of Death. Go you, ascertain the cause of sound and come back to me ; then I will go there and destroy that wretch who made this noise to no purpose. Vyâsa said :—No sooner the messengers heard these words of Mahiṣa, than they at once went to the Devî and saw that Her body and the several parts thereof were all very beautiful; She had eighteen hands, She was decorated completely with various ornaments all over Her body, all the auspicious signs were being seen in Her body and that She was holding excellent divine weapons. That auspicious Goddess beautiful, was holding in Her hands, the cup and drinking wine again and again. Beholding Her this form, they were afraid and fled at once to the Mahiṣa and informed him the cause of that sound.

49-54. The Daityas said :—" O Lord ! We have seen one grown up woman ; whose whereabouts we are quite ignorant. The Devî is decorated with jewels and ornaments all over Her body ; She is not human nor Âsurî but Her form is extraordinary and beautiful. That noble Lady is mounted on a lion, holding weapons on all Her eighteen hands and is roaring loudly ; She is drinking wine ; so it seems that She is puffed up with liquor. It is quite certain that She has no husband. The Devas are gladly chanting praises from the celestial space that Let Victory be to Her side and that She save the Devas, O Lord ! We don't know at all who is that handsome woman? or whose wife is she; why has she come there? and what is Her motive ? Sentiments of love, heroism, laughter, terror and wonder are all fully shining in Her; therefore we are very much overpowered by the halo emitted from Her ; and we could not even see Her well.

Note.—Rasas means sentiments. The rasas are usually eight. Sriṅgâra, Hâsya, Karuṇâ, Raudra, Vîra, Bhayânakâh, Bibhatsâdbhû tasangau, Chetyaṣṭau, Natyan, Rasâh smritâh but sometimes Sântarasah, is added thus making the total number nine; sometimes a tenth, Vâtsalyarasa is also added.

O King ! In compliance with your order, we have come back to you no sooner we had seen the Lady, without even addressing Her in any way. Now order us what we are to do. (55).

56-58. Mahiṣa said:—"O Best of ministers ! O Hero ! Under my command, go there with all the forces and use the means, conciliation, etc., and bring that woman, having a beautiful face (like the Moon), to me. If that Lady do not come even when the three policies, Sâma (conciliation), Dâna (making gifts), and Bheda (sowing dissensions in an enemy's party and thus winning him over to one's side, one of the four Upâyas or means of success against an enemy) are adopted by you, then apply the last resort Daṇḍa, (or war) in such a way that Her life be not destroyed and bring that beautiful woman to me. I will gladly make Her, of black curling hairs, my queen-consort. In case that deer-eyed one comes gladly, then do my desires without causing any unpleasant feeling ; (a cessation of sentiment). I am enchanted on hearing about Her beauties and wealth.

59-67. Vyâsa said:—The prime minister, on hearing the words of Mahiṣa, took with him elephants, horses, and chariots and hurriedly went to the desired place. On coming near to the Devî, the minister began to address Her in sweet words from a sufficient distance in a very humble and courteous way. O Sweet speaking! Who art Thou? What has caused Thee to come here? O Highly fortunate ! My master has asked through me these

questions. My master cannot be killed by all the Devas and men; he has conquered all the Lokas (worlds). O Beautiful-eyed! On account of getting his boon from Brahmâ, the Lord of the Daityas has become very powerful; and consequently being very proud, assumes different forms at will. He, our King-Emperor Mahiṣa, the lord of the earth, hearing about Thy beauty and dress, has expressed a desire to see Thee. O Beautiful one! Whether he will appear before Thee in a human form? He will do whatever Thou likest. O Deer-eyed One! Be pleased now to go to that intelligent King. In case Thou dost not go, we will bring the King, Thy devotee, to Thee. O Lord of the Devas! Our King has heard of Thy beauty and grandeur and has become very much submissive to Thee. We will therefore do exactly what Thou desirest. Therefore, O Thou having thighs thick and round like those of a young of an elephant! Be pleased to express what Thou likest and we will do quickly as Thou desirest.

Here ends the Ninth Chapter of the Fifth Book on the worship offered by the gods to the Devî and the weapons offered by them in the Mahâ Purâṇam, Śrî Mad Devî Bhagâvatam, of 18,000 verses by Maharṣi Veda Vyâsa.

CHAPTER X.

1-16. Vyâsa said:—The Mahâ Mâyâ, that Excellent Lady, hearing thus the words of the prime minister of Mahiṣa, laughed and spoke with a voice, deep like that of a cloud, thus:—"O Minister-in-chief! Know Me as the Mother of the gods; my name is Mahâ Lakṣmî. It is I that destroy all the Daityas. I am requested by all the Devas to kill the Dânava Mahiṣa; they have been oppressed and deprived of their share of Yajña offerings. Therefore I have come here to-day alone, without any army, to take away his life. O Good One! I am pleased with your sweet words of welcome, in showing me marks of respect. Had you not behaved thus, I would have certainly burnt you to ashes by my fiery sight, which is the universal conflagration at the break up of the world. O Minister! Who is there that gets not pleased with sweet words! Go you to Mahiṣa and speak to him the following words of mine:—"O Villain! Go down to Pâtâla (the nether regions) at once if you have any desire to live. Otherwise, I will slay you, the wicked one, in the battlefield; you will have to go to the house of Death, pierced by my mass of arrows. O Stupid One! Know that this is merely kindness shown unto you, that I have told you to go soon to Pâtâla and that the Devas get

possession of their Heaven, with no delay. "O One of weak intellect! Therefore dost Thou leave possession of this sea-girt earth and go alone without any delay to Pâtâla, before my arrows are shot at you. O Asura ! Or if you desire to fight, then come at once with your powerful warriors ; I will destroy all of them. O One of dull intellect ! I will kill you in battle, just as I killed before in yugas after yugas countless Asuras like you. O Passionate creature ! Better shew that your efforts in holding weapons have been crowned with success by your being engaged in battle against Me ; otherwise they will all be useless. O Stupid ! You thought that you would be vulnerable alone to women ; hence you oppressed the Devas entitled to worship ; O wicked one ! No longer show your pride on the srength of your getting the boon from Brahmâ, that you would be vulnerable only to the females. Thinking it advisable to observe the words of the Creator, I have assumed this incomparable Eternal Female appearance and I have come here to slay you, O wicked one ! O stupid one ! If you have any desire for your life, then quit this Heaven and go to Pâtâla, infested with snakes, or anywhere else you like.

17-28. Vyâsa said :—Hearing these words of the Devî, that minister, surrounded by forces, replied in reasonable words thus :—" O Devî! You are speaking in words befitting a woman and puffed up with pride. You are a woman ; the lord of the Daityas is a hero ; how can a battle be engaged between you two. It seems to me impossible. Your body is delicate, a girl in full youth; especially you are alone and Mahiṣa is of huge body and powerful ; so the fight comes next to impossibility. He has elephants, horses, chariots, infantry, etc., and countless soldiers all armed with weapons. Therefore, O Beautiful One ! He will find no difficulty in killing you in battle as an elephant finds no difficulty in treading over the Mâlati flowers. Rather, if I utter anything harsh to you, that would go against the sentiment of love with you ; therefore I cannot speak rudely to you out of my fear not to interrupt the above feeling. True, that our king is an enemy of the gods ; but he has become extremely devoted to you. Therefore it is wise to speak words full of conciliation or generosity. Were it otherwise, I would have shot arrows at you and would have killed you in as much as you have thus boasted in vain and spoken so dire a falsehoold, resting merely on the strength of your youthful pride and cleverness. My master has become fascinated on hearing your extraordinary beauty hardl y to be seen in this world ; it therefore behoves me to speak sweet words to you for the sake of pleasing my master. O Large-eyed ! This kingdom and the wealth thereof are all yours ; in fact, Mahiṣa will be your obedient servant ; therefore, better forsake your anger, leading

to your death ; and cultivate friendship with him. O Sweet Smiling One ! I am falling at your feet ; you better go to him and become at once his queen-consort. O Handsome Woman ! No sooner you become the queen of Mahiṣa than you will get at once all the pure wealth of the three worlds and the unbounding happiness of this world.

29-45. The Devî said :—" Minister ! I now speak what is pregnant with goodness and wisdom to you, according to the rules of the Śâstras, keeping in view also the cleverness that you have shown in using your words. Now I come to understand from your talk, that you are the chief secretary of Mahiṣa ; and therefore your nature and intelligence are like those of a beast. And how can he be intelligent, whose ministership is occupied by a man of your nature ! Nature has ordained connection between two persons of like nature. O Stupid One ! Did you think a little beforehand the meaning of your words when you told me of my feminine nature ? Though I am not apparently a man, yet my nature is that of the Highest Puruṣa (Man) ; I shew myself simply in a feminine form. Your master asked before from Brahmâ that he would prefer death, if possible, at the hands of a woman ; therefore, I consider him quite illiterate and ignorant of the sentiment, worthy of a hero. Because to die at the hands of a woman is very painful to one who is a hero; and this is gladly welcome to one who is a hermaphrodite. Now see that your master Mahiṣa has shown his intelligence, when he courted his death from the hands of a woman. For that very reason, I have come here in the shape of a woman to effect my purpose ; why shall I fear, then, to hear your words, contradictory to those of the Śâstras. When Fate goes against any one, a grass comes like a thunderbolt ; and when fate goes in favour of anyone, a thunderbolt becomes as soft as a bundle of cotton. What does it avail even when one possesses an extensive army or various weapons in abundance, taking shelter in a wide extending fort? What will his soldiers do to him, whose death has come close at hand? Whenever, in due time, the connection of the Jîva (the human soul) with this body is brought about, then his pleasures, pains and death are written. Know this as certain, very certain, that death will come to him in the manner as written by the hands of Fate ; it will never be otherwise. As the birth and death of Brahmâ and other gods are ordained, your death has been similarly ordained ; no, there is no need of taking the example further than this. Those who are tied up by the hands of death are surely fools and of extremely blunt intellect, if they think simply on the strength of their getting some boons "that they would never die." Therefore go quickly to your king and speak to him what I have said; you will then surely obey what he commands you to do. If he wants

his life, he, with his retinue, would at once go down to Pâtâla; let Indra and the other Devas get possession of the Heavens and their share of Yajñas. If he holds a contrary opinion, let him be eager to go to the house of Death and come and fight with Me. If he thinks that Viṣṇu and the other Devas have fled from the battle-fields, he has nothing to boast of ; for he has not shewn his manliness at all even then ; for his victory is solely due to his having got the boon from Brahmâ.

46-52. Vyâsa said :—"Hearing these words of the Devî, the Dânava began to think " whether I ought to fight or to go to Mahiṣa ? The King has become very enamoured and has sent me hither to negotiate for marriage; how then will I be able to go to him if I make this affair unpleasant and interrupted in the middle in its course of harmony." "Now it is wise for me to go to the King without fighting; let me then go as early as possible in this way and inform him about this whole affair. "The King is exceptionally intelligent and experienced; he will consult with his other experienced ministers and do what is best. Therefore I ought not to fight here rashly ; for victory or defeat would a-like be distasteful to my monarch. Whether this Lady kills me, or I kill this Lady, the king will be angry in either case. I will therefore go now to the king and tell him what the Devî has said; he will do whatever he likes.

53-66. Vyâsa said :— Thus that intelligent son of the minister argued and went to the king. Then, bowing down before him, he began to say thus :—O King ! That excellent woman, fascinating to the world, the beautiful Devî is sitting on a lion with weapons in all her eighteen hands. O King ! I told him "O Beautiful Lady ! Be attached to Mahiṣâsura; you will become, then, the queen-consort of the king, the lord of the three worlds. You will certainly then be his queen-consort ; he will pass his life, ever obedient to you like an obedient servant. "O Beautiful One! If you choose to make Mahiṣa your husband, you will become fortunate amongst women and will enjoy ever all the wealth of the three worlds." Hearing my these words, that large-eyed woman, puffed up with egoism, laughed a little and said thus :—' Your king is born of a buffalo and is the worst of brutes ; I will sacrifice him before the Devî for the benefit of the gods. Is there any woman in this world so stupid as to select Mahiṣa as her husband ? O You stupid ! Can a woman like me ever indulge in bestial sentiments ! A female buffalo has got horns ; she, being excited with passion, may select your Mahiṣa with horns as her husband and come to him bellowing. I am not stupid nor like her so as to make him my husband. O Villain! I will fight and destroy the enemies of the gods in the battle-field. Or

if he desires to live, let him flee to Pâtâla. O King! Hearing those rough words uttered by Her in a moment of madness, I have come to you, thinking also how to redress this wrong. O King! Only I feared not to interrupt in your love sentiment; and therefore I did not fight with Her; especially, without Your command, how can I engage myself in useless excitement? O Lord of the Earth! That handsome woman rests maddened on Her own strength; I do not know what is in the womb of future or whatever is destined to happen, will surely come to pass. You are the sole master in this matter; I will do whatever you order me. The matter is very difficult to be reflected upon; whether it is better to fight or it is better to fly away, I cannot say definitely

Here ends the Tenth Chapter of the Fifth Skandha on the messenger's news to Mahiṣa, in Śrî Mad Devî Bhâgavatam, the Mahâ Purâṇam, of 18,000 verses by Maharṣi Veda Vyâsa

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CHAPTER XI.

1-3. Vyâsa said:—The King Mahiṣâsura, maddened with pride, heard the messenger's words and called the aged and experienced ministers and said thus:—O Ministers! What am I to do now? Better judge you all well, and speak out definitely to me. Is it that this Devî has been created by the Devas like the Mâyâ of Sambarâsura and thus has appeared before us? You are all dexterous and know where to apply the four means of success, *viz.*, conciliation, gift or bribery, sowing dissensions, and war; and therefore you would better tell me which one of the above four, I am to adopt now.

4-7. The ministers said:— O King! One should always speak true and at the same time pleasant; the wise ones should then select only those which are beneficial and apply them. O King! As a medicine, though bitter, cures diseases, so true words, though appearing unpleasant, lead to beneficial results. Those that are simply pleasant, are generally injurious as to their effects. O Lord of the Earth! The bearers and approvers of truth both are very rare; truth speakers also are very difficult to be seen; laudatory sycophancy is found in a great measure in this world. O King! Nobody in the three worlds knows what will be good or what will lead to inauspicious results? How can we then definitely pronounce our judgment in this difficult matter?

8-9. The King said:—Let each of you say separately, according to his own intellect, what is his opinion; I will hear them all and consider

for myself. Clever persons should hear the opinions of several persons, then judge for himself what is the best and then adopt that as what is to be done.

10. Vyâsa said:—Hearing his words, the powerful Virûpâkṣa came out foremost of all and began to say pleasant words to the King.

11-16. O King! Please take for certain, what has been spoken by that ordinary woman, swelled with vanity, as words simply to scare you. The efforts and courage of a woman are known to all; who will be afraid therefore, to hear abusive language from a woman, praising her ownself in matters of warfare? O King! You have conquered the three worlds by your own heroic valour; now if you acknowledge your inferiority, out of fear to a woman, you would be subject to very much disgrace in this world. Therefore, O King! I will go alone to fight with Chaṇḍikâ and I will kill Her. You can stay here now without any fear. O King! See my prowess now; I am just now going with my army and I will kill that violent Chaṇḍikâ, maddened with pride, or I will tie Her down by a coil of snakes and bring Her before you; then that Lady, seeing Herself helpless, will become quite submissive to you; there is no doubt in this.

17-30. Vyâsa said:—Hearing these words of Virûpâkṣa, Durdhara said:—O King! Virûpâkṣa is very intelligent; what he has said just now is all reasonable and true. O King! You are intelligent; hear my words full of truth also. As far as I think, I consider that woman with beautiful teeth as passionate. For that woman of broad hips has expressed a desire to bring you under control by making you fearful; the mistresses, proud of their beauty generally use such words when they become passionate. When they behave in this way, people call these amorous gestures. These crooked words of mistresses are the chief causes in attracting dear persons unto them. Those who are skilled in the art of love affair, some of them can know these things thoroughly well. O King! That woman has said, "I will pierce and kill you by arrows, face to face, in the battle-field." The sense of this is different. The wise persons that are clever and experienced in the art of finding out the cause, declare that the above sentence is pregnant with deep and esoteric meaning. You can easily see that the handsome women have no other arrows with them; their side-glances are their arrows. And their words carry their hidden meanings, and, expressing their desires, are their flowers. O King! Brâhmâ, Viṣṇu and Maheṣa even have no powers to shoot arrows at you; how can, then, that helpless woman, who appears so passionate, dart real arrows at you? O King! That lady said:—"O Stupid! I will kill your King by my arrow-like eye-sight. "But the messenger was wanting in that power to appreciate; so he, no doubt, understood her words in their

contrary sense. The saying of that lady "I will lay your lord in the death-bed in the battle-field " is to be taken in the light of inverted sexual intercourse, where woman is above the man. Her utterence " I will take away the vitality (life) of your lord is also significant. The semen virile is known as the vitality (life). Therefore the above expression means that she will make you devoid of your virility. There can be no other meaning. O King ! Those women that are excellent shew by too much of their covert expressions (inuendos) that they select and like very much their beloved. The experts only in these amorous affairs will be able to appreciate these things. Knowing thus, dealings ought to be made with Her so that the harmony in amorous sentiments be not broken. O King ! Sâma (conciliation) and Dâna (gifts) are the two means to be adopted; there is no other way. By these two, that Lady, whether she be proud or angry, is sure to be brought under control ; I will go now and bring Her before you by such sweet words. O king ! What is the use of my talking too much? I will make Her submissive to you like a slave girl.

31-44.—Vyâsa said :—Hearing those words of Durdhara, the Dânava Tâmra, who was very experienced in finding out the real nature, said:—'I am telling you what is sanctioned by virtue and is at the same time full of sweet amorous feelings, pregnant with deep meanings. Kindly hear:—"O Giver of honour ! This intelligent woman is not at all passionate nor devoted to you ; nor has that woman used any covert expressions to you." "O Great Hero ! This is strange indeed that a Lady, beautiful, hand-some, and of strange features, at the same time alone and helpless, has come here to fight." A good-looking woman, powerful, and having eighteen hands is never heard of, nor ever seen by me in these three worlds. She is holding in each of Her hands powerful weapons. O king ! All these seem to be the contrary actions of Time. O King ! I saw ominous dreams during the night ; and I conclude, therefore, that great dangers are over our heads. Early in the morning twilight, I saw in my dream that a woman, wearing a black raiment, was weeping in the inner courtyard ; that some inauspicious events are forthcoming can be easily judged from the above. O King ! The birds were screaming hoarsely in every house and various calamitous events were seen in various houses ; at this time that woman, firmly resolved, was challenging you to fight ; it, therefore, seems to me that there is something very serious in this matter. O Lord ! This woman is neither human, nor a Gandharvî, nor the wife of any Asura. Only to cause delusion to us, she, this wondrous Mâyâ has been created by the gods. O King ! In no case, weakness is to be resorted; it is wise by all means to fight as best as possible ; what is inevitable will come to pass ; this is my opinion. No one is able to unriddle the doings

of the Devas, whether they would be aus picious or inauspicious. Therefore intelligent ones should weigh pros and cons carefully and remain patient and steady. O King ! Life or death is at the hands of Destiny ; Nobody, therefore, can do it otherwise.

45-51. Hearing this, Mahiṣâsura said :—"'O Highly fortunate Tâmra ! Better, then, stand for fight, fully resolved and go to that Lady, beautiful, and conquer Her according to rules of justice and bring Her before me. "In case She does not come under your control in fight, kill Her ; but if She comes round, then shew Her honour ; do not kill Her. "O All-knowing ! You are a great hero and at the same thoroughly conversant with Kâma Śâstra (science of love); therefore conquer that Fair One by any means you can." "O valiant Tâmra, of mighty prowess ! Go then with a mighty force and ponder over again and again and find out Her intention. Is She prompted by passion or by real inimical feeling or by any other motive ? Try to find out whose Mâyâ is this ? Know all these beforehand; then find out the remedy ; next fight with Her according to your strength and prowess. Weakness should not be shown nor merciless behaviour is to be resorted ; you should behave with Her according to the bent of Her mind.

52. Vyâsa said :—O king ! Thus hearing the King's words, Tâmra coming as if under the sway of Death, saluted the king Mahiṣa and marched away with his army.

53-66. That wicked Dânava, who on his way, began to see all the fearful inauspicious signs, indicative of Death, became surprised and was caught with fear. When he arrived at the spot, he saw the Devî standing on a lion, while She was decorated with all the weapons and instruments, and all the Devas were chanting hymns to Her. Tâmra, then bowed down before Her with humility and modesty and addressed Her with sweet words, according to the rules of the policy of conciliation. "O Devî ! Mahiṣa, the lord of the Daityas, has become enchanted on hearing Your beauty and qualifications and has become desirous to marry You" O Beautiful One! You would better be graciously pleased with that conqueror of the Immortals, the Mahiṣâsura ; O Thou of delicate limbs ! Make him your husband and enjoy all the exquisite pleasures of the Nandana garden as best as you can. The end and aim of attaining this human form, beautiful in every respect and the abode of all bliss, is to enjoy, in every way, all the pleasures of human existence and to avoid the sources of all troubles. This is the rule.

" O Thou of beautiful thighs like those of the young of an elephant ! Your soft and delicate lotus-like hands are fit to play only with nice balls of

flowers; why then are You holding in Your hands all the weapons and arrows? What is the use of holding ordinary arrows, when those two eye-brows like bows, are existing with You? What need have you to take ordinary arrows when you are graced with those piercing eye sights, your arrows. The war is exceedingly painful in this world; those who know thus ought never to fight. It is only those human beings that are prompted by greed, that fight with each other. What to speak of those sharpened arrows, one ought not to fight with flowers even; O Devî! You can well say who is it that feels pleasure, when one's own body is pierced? Therefore, O Delicate One! Gladly you can worship Mahiṣa, the lord of the world and the object of worship of the Devas and Dânavas. Then he will satisfy all your desires. What more to say, you will no doubt be his queen-consort. O Devî! If one tries one's best, it is doubtful whether one would be crowned with success; therefore keep my this request; you will surely get all the best pleasures. "O Beautiful! You are well acquainted with all the politics; therefore you better enjoy thoroughly the pleasures of the kingdom for full many years. "And if you marry Mahiṣa you will have beautiful sons and those sons again will be kings; and enjoying the pleasures of your full grown womanhood, you will no doubt, be happy in your old age.

Here ends the Eleventh Chapter of the Fifth Book on the appearing of the Dânava Tâmra before the Devî in Śrî Mad Devî Bhagâvatam, the Mahâ Purâṇam, of 18,000 verses, by Maharṣi Veda Vyâsa.

CHAPTER XII.

1. Vyâsa said:—The World-Mother, hearing Tâmra's words, spoke laughing a little and with a deep voice like that of a rumbling thunder cloud.

2-13. The Devî spoke:—"O Tâmra! Go and say to your Lord Mahiṣa who, it seems, is stupid, whose end is nigh, who has become very passionate, and who is void of knowledge what is proper and what is improper." I am not like your grown up mother, the she-buffalo, having horns, eating grass, with a long tail and a big belly. I do not like to have Viṣṇu, the god Śankara, Brahmâ, Kuvera, Varuṇa, or Fire. How then can I select a beast? If I do so, I will be an object of much censure amongst the several worlds. "I am not desirous of any more husband; my Husband is existing; though He is the Lord of all, Witness of All, yet He is not the Actor; He is without any desires and He is calm

and tranquil. He, the Śiva, is devoid of any Prâkritic qualities, without any attachment, the Great Infinte, without anyone to rely on, without any refuge, omniscient, omnipresent, the Great Witness, the Full, and the seat of the Full, the Auspicious. He is the abode of all, capable to do all, the peaceful, capable to create everything and He is seeing everywhere. How can I then leave Him and try to serve the dull, stupid Mahiṣa ? Let him come and fight with this understanding that he will be defeated and be made the conveyance of Yama, the God of Death or the carrier of water of the human beings. And if that impious heretic desire to live, let him fly at once to Pâtâla with all his demon comrades ; else I will slay him in battle. See ! The combination of similar substances leads to happiness ; and if out of ignorance, the connection takes place between things entirely different in their natures, it becomes at once the source of all pains and troubles." You are a thorough illiterate when you ask me to worship your lord ; do you not see me endowed with exquisite beauty ? and what is your Mahiṣa ? A buffalo with horns ; how can then connection become possible between us ? Better fly away or fight if you like ; I will kill you and your friends, and if you leave the region of Heaven and the share of Yajña, then you will become happy."

14-30. Vyâsa said, O King ! Thus saying, the Devî howled and roared so loudly that it appeared strange and it caused a great terror to the Dânavas who took it as the great dissolution of the universe at the end of a Kalpa. The earth and the mountains trembled: the wives of the Dânavas had miscarriages at that terrific noise. Tâmra hearing that sound was terrified ; his mind became unsteady and he at once fled to Mahiṣa. O King ! The Danavas present in the city became deaf; thy fled and became very anxious and were absorbed in the thought whence and how that sound came. The lion, too, enraged and, raising up its manes, roared so loud that the Daityas became very much terrified. Mahiṣa, too, became confounded to see Tâmra returning ; he then held a council with his ministers what ought to be done next ? Mahiṣâsura said:—"O best of the Dânavas ! Shall we now take our shelter within the forts ? Or shall we go out and fight ? Or will it be favourable to us if we fly away ?" You all are intelligent and versed in all the Śâstras and unconquerable by your foes ; therefore ought you all to consult over the the matter in utmost privacy for our success at the present moment." The root of Kingdom lies in the council in the secret place (cabinet) and Statesmanship ; if this counsel be kept well preserved in secrecy, then that Kingdom is also kept entire ; therefore it is highly incumbent that the plan be kept in strictest confidence amongst the good and virtuous ministers. "If the plan be out, then destruction comes both to the King and his Kingdom; hence the plan must be kept secret

by those wanting glory, lest it be taken advantage of and rendered ineffective by other persons." O Ministers! Now declare, taking due consideration of time and place, after duly discussing and ascertaining what is the best course to adopt, what would be beneficial and full of reason and intelligence. First find out the cause why this powerful woman, created by the Devas has come here alone and helpless? That woman is challenging us to fight. What more wonder can there be than this? Who can say in the three worlds what the result will be, whether it will be good or otherwise? Victory comes not to many persons nor defeat comes to a single individual; therefore victory or defeat lies at the hands of the Luck and Destiny. Those who plead for place, policy, statesmanship, they say what is Fate? Is there anyone who has seen Fate? (Adriṣṭa) No one has seen His appearance." It may be argued that there may exist such a thing as Fate; to which it might be replied, what proofs are there for such an existence? Thus the weak persons alone hold it out as their only hope; nowhere are seen energetic persons who can fulfil their ends by their own efforts, by those who enrol themselves under Fate. Therefore "effort," "energy" are the words of the heroes and "Fate" is the word of the cowards. You should all consider to-day these subjects fully and intelligently and then decide what are we to do?

31-39. Vyâsa said:—Thus hearing the King, the famous Viḍâlâkṣa with folded hands spoke thus:—O king! First it should be definitely ascertained whose wife is she, this woman possessing large eyes? Whence and for what purpose has she come here; next what ought to be done should be decided. It seems to me that the Devas, knowing that your death will ensue from the hands of a woman, have created very carefully this lotus-eyed woman out of their own essences. And they are lying in wait, unknown to anybody in the celestial space with a desire to see the battle but really to fight with you. In due time, they will undoubtedly help this woman. When the war will ensue, Viṣṇu and the other Devas will put this woman in front and slay us all. Whereas this Devî will slay you. This is their earnest desire. O king! I have come to know this beforehand; but what will be the actual result I cannot say. I cannot say also whether it is advisable for You to fight now; therefore it would be better if you consider yourself well on this matter of the gods and do accordingly. Our duty, the duty of your servants lies in this:—That we should sacrifice at any moment our lives for the preservation of your prestige; and to enjoy with you whenever you are enjoying. But, O King! It is extremely advisable to ponder over this very carefully when we see that this woman, though alone, is challenging us to fight who are armed with powerful soldiers.

40-44. Durmukha said :— O king ! I know for certain, that we will not get victory in this battle ; still we ought not to shew our backs ; for that would lead us to sheer disgrace. Even in our encounter with Indra and other Devas, we did nothing hateful and blameable ; then how can any of us fly away when we come face to face with a helpless woman ? Therefore fight we must ; that is certain ; let whatever happen. What is inevitable, must come to pass. Thus considered, what need we care for the result ? If we die in the battle, we will get name and fame ; if we be victorious, we will get happiness. Thus thinking both the cases, we must fight to-day. Death is inevitable when our longevity expires ; our prestige will suffer if we fly away ; therefore we ought not to spend uselessly our time in thus expressing our vain regret for life or for death.

45-51. Vyâsa said :—O king ! Hearing thus the Durmukha's words, Vâskala, the eloquent speaker, thus spoke to the king, with clasped hands and his head bowed down. O king ! You need not think thus in agony with this unpleasant affair ; alone I will kill that Chaṇḍikâ, of unsteady eyes. O Best of kings ! To be always prompt and energetic indicates that one is steady in one's heroic valour; to consider one's enemy as dreadful is contrary to above; so we ought now to take recourse to heroic valour. O king ! Therefore I will discard fear altogether and fight out valiantly ; I will no doubt, send Chaṇḍikâ in the battle-field to the abode of Death. I fear not Yama, nor Indra, nor Kuvera, nor Vâyu nor Agni, nor Viṣṇu, nor Śankara, nor Moon nor Sun ; I donot fear any of them ; what fear can I, then, entertain of that vain arrogant woman, who has got none to support her. I will kill Her with these arrows, sharpened on stones. You can see to-day the prowess of my arms and enjoy peace ; you will not have to go to battle any more to fight with Her.

52-65. Vyâsa said :—O king ! Vâskala having said thus to the lord Mahiṣa in a haughty spirit, Durdhara bowed down and said thus :— O Lord of the earth ! Let the purpose be whatsoever, with which the beautiful Devî with eighteen hands, the creation of the gods, may come hither, I will vanquish Her. O king ! I think, it is simply to terrify you, as the Suras have thus created this Mâyâ woman ; therefore, do you forsake your delusion by knowing this merely as a scare. "O King ! Such is the statesmanship ; now hear about the workings of the ministers. Ministers in this world are of three kinds :—(1) Sâttik ; (2) Râjasik and (3) Tâmasik. Those ministers in whom the Sattva quality is predominant, they perform their Master's duties according to their own strength. The Sâttik Mantris (ministers) are well versed in their Mantra Śâstras (the policies and statesmanship), virtuous and one—pointed in their thoughts, they never do any injury to their king and they fulfil

their own purposes. The Râjasik Mantris are of different sorts; they are always after their own interests; at times, whenever they like, they do the State duties. The Tâmasik Mantris always look of their own interests out of their greedy nature; they serve their ends even by ruining the regal interests. It is the Tâmasik Mantris that are influenced by the bribes from the enemies, become separated at their hearts from their own masters and give out the secrets to the enemies, while staying in their homes. They always advise alienation policy like the sword ensheathed in a scabbard; and when the time of war comes, they always frighten their masters. Therefore, O King! Never put your trust on ministers; if you do so, they will always hinder you in your actions and counsels; what harm cannot be done by those ministers that are treacherous, greedy, deceitful and void of any intelligence and always addicted to vicious acts, when they are trusted! Therefore, O king! I will go myself to the battle and serve your purpose; you need not be at all anxious in this matter. I will soon bring before you that vicious woman; I will do your actions by my own strength and powers. Let you be calm; and look at my strength, fortitude and valour.

Here ends the Twelfth Chapter of the Fifth Book on the holding of counsel by Mahiṣâsura in Śrî Mad Devî Bhâgavatam the Mahâ Purâṇam, of 18,000 Ṣlokas by Maharṣi Veda Vyâsa

CHAPTER XIII

1-6. Vyâsa said:—O King! The two powerful Dânavas Vâskala and Durmukha, well-versed in arts of warfare, went out for battle, maddened with their prowess. The two Dânavas, elated with vanity, went to the battle-field and began to address the Devî in voice deep as the rumbling of a cloud. O Beautiful Devî! You better choose and worship the Lord of the Daityas, that high-souled Mahiṣâsura who has conquered all the Devas. He will come before you in privacy in a human shape, with all auspicious signs and adorned with beautiful ornaments. O Sweet smiling One! Better place your highest feelings of love on the lovely Mahiṣa as your husband, and you will get all the pleasures of the three worlds as you desire. O Sweet speaking! In short, if you select him as your husband, you will be the mistress of those incomparable worldly happinesses that women always aspire.

7-13. Hearing thus the words of Vâskala and Durmukha, the Devî said:—"O Stupid! Do you think Me as deluded by passion? Do I not possess strength and intelligence that I will worship that hypocrite Mahiṣa

as husband ? See ! The ladies of a high family select those persons that are equal in rank as far as family and distinctions, qualifications and propriety of conduct are concerned or those who are superior in beauty, cleverness, intelligence and other qualifications. Then how can a Devî, becoming passionate, worship the worst of all beasts, the beast Mahiṣa ? O two Asuras ! Go you immediately to your King Mahiṣa resembling in his body like an elephant and having a pair of horns and tell him "Go either to Pâtâla (the nether regions) or come and fight with Me ; the Lord of the Devas will no doubt be happy if the war ensues." "O Stupid ! My advent here cannot go in vain ; I will easily slay you and then depart ; knowing this do as you like." "O Beast ! Without conquering Me, you would get no shelter either in the heavens, or in this earth, or in the caves of mountains ?

14-25. Vyâsa said:—Hearing thus, the two powerful Daityas, with eyes reddened with anger, firmly resolved to fight and took bows and arrows in their hands. O Descent of Kuru ! The Devî then made a terrible noise and fearlessly stood there. The two Dânavas then began to shoot dreadful arrows at Her. For the victory of the Devas, the Devî also began to hurl arrows after arrows on the two Dânavas, emitting a sweet sound. Vâskala first came forward with no delay ; and Durmukha stood aloof there simply as a witness. The terrible fight then ensued between the Devî and Vâskala ; arrows, swords and weapons were seen shining in the air and raised terror to those that were dull in intellect Then the Mother of the Universe seeing Vâskala growing turbulent shot at him five arrows sharpened on stone. The Dânava, too, cut off the arrows of the Devî and hurled seven arrows at Her, seated on a lion. The Devî cut off the Dânava's arrows and shot at that hypocrite, sharpened arrows and began to laugh frequently. She again cut off his arrows with Ardhachandra arrow ; Vâskala then pursued the Devî with a club in his hands to slay Her. Seeing the arrogant Dânava with club in his hands, Chaṇḍika Devî struck him down on the ground with Her own club. The very powerful Vâskala fell down on the ground but rose up within a very short time and hurled again on the Devî his club. Seeing him again attacking Her, the Devî got angry and pierced him with Her trident ; Vâskala fell down, thus pierced, and died.

26-38. Vâskala falling thus dead on the field, the soldiers of the wicked demon routed ; whereas the Devas became glad and repeatedly shouted aloud "Victory to the Devî." On this Daitya being slain, Durmukha came forward on the battle-field, filled with anger and accompained by a stronger army. Mounted on a chariot, shielded all over his

body with a coat of armour, Durmukha came before the Devî, shouting all along "Wait, wait, O You weak woman!" and with bows and arrows in his hands. The Devî blew Her conchshell and made sounds by stretching Her bow in order to make the Dânava infuriated with anger. The Asura then began to shoot sharp arrows after arrows like poisonous snakes. The Mahâmâyâ, by Her own arrows, cut off those of Her enemy and began to shout loudly. The fight then raged furiously, when both parties began to use arrows, Śaktis, clubs, Musalas, and Tomaras. Blood began to flow in the battle-field in torrents like rivers and on the banks of that river of blood, were seen the severed heads of the dead bodies which looked like so many hollow shells of gourds, as if kept there by the attendant of the god of Death, for their swimming purposes. The battle-field, then, became very dreadful and impassable ; at some places dead bodies are lying ; wolves are feeding on their flesh ; at other places are seen jackals, dogs, herons, crows, vultures, eagles, and other voracious birds and beasts and iron-tipped arrows, eating the dead bodies of those wicked demons. Air began to emit an offensive smell, because of its contact with these corpses ; and there were heard the heart-rending sounds of various carnivorous birds and animals. Then the wicked Durmukha began, as if inspired by the god of Death, to address the Devî angrily and arrogantly with his right hand raised up before Her. "Your brain has become perverted ; fly away just now or I will send you unto death, or you better accept the proud Mahiṣa, the lord of the Daityas, as your husband.

39-50. The Devî said:—"O Villain ! I see your death at hand this very day ; therefore you are deluded and therefore raving like a mad man. I will kill you to-day like Vâskala." O Stupid ! Better fly away ; or if you prefer death, then wait ; I will slay you first ; then the dull Mahiṣa, the son of a she-buffalo". Hearing thus, Durmukha, as if prompted by Death, hurled dreadful arrows on the Devî. Instantly the Devî, too, cut off all his arrows and, infuriated with anger, pierced the Dânava by sharpened arrows as Indra had pierced Vritrâsura before. The fight then turned out very dreadful. O King ! Weak persons become very afraid and strong ones become very excited. Instantly the Devî cut off the Asura's bow and broke his chariot by five arrows. On seeing his chariot broken, the powerful Durmukha attacked on foot the Devî with his club, very hard to overcome. He knocked at the head of the lion with that club with great force ; but the powerful lion did not become unsteady, though so very hard hit. Seeing the demon thus standing before Her, the goddess Ambikâ cut down his head by her sharpened axe. On his head being thus severed, Durmukha fell down dead on the field. The band of Immortals, then, loudly shouted "Victory to the Devî." When Durmukha was slain, the

Immortals from the celestial space began to chant praises and hymns to the Devî, showered down flowers on Her head and gave shouts of "Victory to the Devî." Tha Ṛisis, Siddhas, Gandarbhas, Vidyâdharas, and Kinnaras all became very glad to see the Demon dead on the field.

Here ends the Thirteenth Chapter of the Fifth Book on the killing of Vâskala and Durmukha in Śrî Mad Devî Bhâgavatam, the Mahâpurâham, of 18,000 verses by Mahiṣa Veda Vyâsa.

CHAPTER XIV.

1-4. Vyâsâ said :—Hearing the death news of Durmukha, Mahiṣâsura became blind with anger and began to utter repeatedly to the Dânavas "O ! What is this ? What is this ?" Alas ! That delicate woman has slain in battle the two heroes Durmukha and Vâskala ! Lo ! Now look at the wonderful workings of the Daiva (Fate). It is the acts virtuous, or otherwise that make men dependent ; and the powerful Time awards pleasure or pain accordingly. The two powerful Demons are killed ; what are we to do hereafter ? You all judge and say what is reasonable at this critical juncture.

5-23. Vyâsa said :—When the powerful Mahiṣa said thus, his general Chikṣura, the great warrior spoke as follows :—" O King ! Why are you so anxious as to take away the life of a delicate woman ? I will kill Her ; thus saying he departed for battle, mounted on his chariot and accompanied by his own army. The powerful Tâmra accompanied him as his attendant ; the sky and all the quarters became filled with the clamour of their vast army. The auspicious Devî Bhagavatî saw them before Her and She made an extraordinary wonderful sound with Her conchshell, with Her bow string and with Her great bell. The Asuras heard that and trembled and fled, speaking amongst each other " What is this ?" The Chikṣurâkṣa seeing them turning their backs, told them very angrily " O Dânavas ! What fear has now overcome you ? I will slay to-day this vain woman in the battle with arrows ; so you should quit your fear and remain steady in battle. Thus saying, the Dânava Chieftain Chikṣura came fearlessly before the Devî with bows and arrows in his hands and, accompanied by his army, angrily spoke thus :—" O Thou of large and broad eyes ! Why are you roaring to terrify the weak persons ! O the Soft limbed One ! I have heard all about your deeds but I am not a bit afraid of You." O One of beautiful eyes ! It is a matter of disgrace, rather sin, to kill a woman ; knowing this my heart wants to pass over this act. (does not like to do it, if my purpose be served without it).

O Beautiful One! The women fight with their side glances and amorous gestures; but I have never heard a woman like you coming to fight with arms and weapons. Even the delicate flowers, Mâlati, etc., cause pain on the bodies of beautiful women like you; so it is not advisable to fight against you with flowers even; what to speak of sharpened arrows! Fie on those who spend their lives according to the Kṣatriya Dharma! Oh! Who can praise that Dharma which allows this dear body of ours to be pierced by sharpened arrows? This dear body is nourished by sweet food, by being smeared with oil, and by smelling the scents of beautiful flowers. Ought, then, one to destory it by arrows from an enemy? Men get their bodies pierced by arrows and then become rich. Now is it possible for the riches to give pleasure afterwards when they caused such pains in the beginning? Even if this be so, fie on those riches! O Beautiful One! It seems you are not intelligent; why have you desired to fight instead of to enjoy sexual pleasures. O beautiful! What merits have you found in the battle that you have choosen this. Where you see the action of the axes and spears, striking each other with clubs, and hurling of sharpened arrows and weapons and where, when death comes, jackals come and feed upon the dead bodies, what merits have you been able to trace out in these things! It is only those cunning poets that praise these; they say that those who die in battle go to heaven! O Beautiful ! Those sayings are, no doubt, mere flatteries. Therefore, O Excellent One! Go away anywhere else you like; or accept this king Mahiṣa, the tormentor of the Devas, as your husband.

24-30. Vyâsa said:—O King! The Dânava Chikṣura speaking thus, the Divine Mother addressed him thus:—O Stupid! Why are you speaking false words, having no significance, like a literary man giving out mere words only? You do not know anything of politics, ethics, metaphysics; you serve the illiterate and stupid; therefore, you are also a first class illiterate; you do not know what are the royal duties; then what are you speaking before me? I will kill that Mahiṣâsura in battle, make the soil muddy with his blood, thus establish firmly My pillar of Fame and then go happily to My abode. Surely will I slay that vain vicious demon, the tormentor of the Devas. Better fight steadily. O Stupid! Better go to Pâtâla with all the Dânavas, if you and Mahiṣa desire to live any longer. And if you like to go unto death, then be ready and fight without any delay; I will slay you all; this is My firm resolve.

31-39. Vyâsa said:—O king! Hearing the Devî's words, the Dânava, proud of his own strength, began to hurl instantly on Her showers of arrows, as if another shower of rain burst upon Her. The Devî cut off those arrows

into pieces by Her sharp arrows and shot at him dreadful arrows like poisonous snakes. Then their fight became astounding to the public; the Divine Mother, then, struck him with Her club so much that he fell down from his chariot. That vicious demon, thus struck by the club, remained senseless near to his chariot for two muhûrtas, fixed like a mountain. Tâmra, the tormentor of the foes, seeing him thus, could not remain steady and came forward to fight with Chaṇḍikâ. The Devî, seeing him laughed and said "O Dânava! Come, Come, I will instantly send you unto death." Or, what is the use of your coming? You are so weak that you can be called lifeless. What is that stupid Mahiṣa doing now? Is he thinking out the way to save his life? You all are too weak; no use in killing you, all my labours will go in vain, if that wicked Mahiṣa, the enemy of the gods, be not slain. Therefore, do you go to your home and send here your king Mahiṣa. I am staying here in that form in which that wicked one likes very much to see Me.

40-56. Hearing Her words, Tâmra became very angry and drawing his bow up to his ear, began to hurl arrows after arrows on Chaṇḍikâ Devî. The Bhagvatî, too, had her eyes reddened with anger and drawing Her bow began to shoot arrowing quickly at the demon, wishing to kill, as early as possible, the enemy of the gods. In the meanwhile, Chikṣura regained his senses, and taking up again his bow in an instant, came before the Devî. Then Chikṣura and Tâmra, the two valiant warriors, began to fight dreadfully with the Devî. Mahâ Mâyâ then, became very angry and began to hurl arrows after arrows so incessantly that all the armours of all the Dânavas became pierced and were cut down to pieces. The Asuras, thus pierced by arrows, became infuriated with anger and hurled angrily a network of arrows upon the Devî. The Dânavas, thus struck with sharp arrows and filled with cuts and wounds looked like the red Kims'uka flowers in the spring. The fight then grew so severe between Tâmra and Bhagavatî that the seers, the Devas, were all struck with wonder. Tâmra struck on the head of the lion with his dreadful hard Muṣala (club), made of iron, and laughed and shouted aloud. Seeing him thus vociferating, the Devî became angry and cut off his head by her sharp axes in no time. The head being thus severed from the body, Tâmra, though headless, for a moment turned round his Muṣala and then fell down on the ground. The powerful Chikṣura, seeing Tâmra thus falling down, instantly took up his axe and ran after Chaṇḍikâ. Seeing Chikṣura with axe in his hand, the Bhagvatî quickly shot at him five arrows. With one arrow, his axe was cut down, with the second arrow his hands were cut and with the remaining ones his head was severed from his body. Thus when the two cruel warriors were slain, their soldiers soon fled

away in terror in all directions. The Devas were exceedingly glad at their downfall and showered gladly flowers from the sky and uttered shouts of Victory to the Devî. The Risis, Gandarbhas, the Vetâlas, the Siddhas and Châranas were all very glad and began to utter repeatedly "O Goddess ! Victory, victory be Yours."

Here ends the Fourteenth Chapter of the Fifth Skandha on the killing of Tâmra and Chiksura in Śrî Mad Devî Bhâgavatam, the Mahâ Purâṇam, of 18,000 verses by Maharsi Veda Vyâsâ,

CHAPTER XV.

1-3. Vyâsa said :—O King ! Hearing the two Demons slain by the Devî, Mahiṣâsura became very much amazed and sent the powerful Asilomâ and Vidâlâkṣa and the other Dânavas to the battle to kill the Devî. The Dânavas, all very skilled in the art of warfare, marched out for battle, fully equipped with weapons and clad in armour, and well attended by a vast army. They arrived there and saw the Divine Mother with eighteen hands taking Her stand on a lion, with axes and shields in Her hands.

4-5. The calm-tempered Asilomâ appeared before the Devî ready to kill the Daityas, saluted Her and smilingly said :—O Devî ! Why have You come here ? and what for You are killing these faultless Daityas ? O Beautiful One ! Tell all these to me truly. We will make treaty with you.

6-17. Take gold, jewels, pearls and any other excellent things that you like and retire from the field as early as passible. Why do you like this warfare tending to increase misery ; the wise persons say that it leads to the destruction of all happiness. Your body is very delicate ; it cannot bear the stroke of flowers even ; then why are you suffering the stroke of weapons on your bodies ; I am very much puzzled to think these things. See ! The cleverness is judged when peace is the result thereof ; for it leads always to happiness. Then why are you liking to fight which will lead only to pain and suffering. Happiness is only to be had and pain is to be avoided ; this is the rule. O Devî ! That happiness is again of two kinds :—Permanent and transitory. The pleasure that comes out of the knowledge of Atmajñân is permanent and that which is derived from enjoyments is transitory ; these who know truly the Veda Śâstra, they avoid this transitory pleasure of enjoyments. If you follow the opinion of the Mimâmsakas and do not believe in the

existence of future births, even then you ought not to fight; when you have got this youthful age, you ought to enjoy the excellent pleasures in this world. O One of lean stomach! And if you doubt in the existence of the other worlds after death, even then you ought to desert from fighting and perform, in this life, such actions as will lead you to the attainment of Heavens. This fully developed womanhood is transient; knowing this do virtuous actions always; the wise ones always avoid tormenting others; thus one ought to perform things not contradictory to Dharma, Artha and Kâma. Therefore, O Auspicious One! Do You also things virtuous always. O Mother! Why are you killing these Daityas without any cause? There is, again, the feeling of mercy: the lives again of all are dependent on Truth. Therefore the sages always preserve piety, mercy and Truth. O Beautiful One! Then what is the use in Your killing these Demons? Please say explicitly on this point.

18-27. The Devî said:—O Powerful one! Hear why I have come here and why I am killing the Daityas? I answer your question on the above points. O Demon! I, though merely a spectator, always go about all over the worlds, seeing the justices and injustices done by the several souls there. Never I possess any desire of enjoyment, nor have I greed for anything, nor have I enmity with any creature. Only to preserve the virtue and religion and to keep up the righteous, I roam over the worlds. This is My vow and I always adher e to it. To preserve the good and to put down the evil doers is My duty. M any Avatâras are to take their incarnations, cycles after cycles, to p reserve the Vedas; therefore I incarnate Myself in yugas after yugas. No w the wicked Mahiṣa is ready to destroy the Devas; seeing this, I have come here to kill him. I tell you verily that I will slay that vicious powerful Mahiṣâsura, the enemy of the gods. Knowing this, you remain or depart, as you desire. Or you can go to Mahiṣa, that impious son of a she-buffalo, and say what is the use in sending other Asuras to the battle; he can come himself and fight. If your king likes to make a treaty, then let him avoid his enmity with the Devas and go down to the Pâ tâla. Let him return to the Devas whatever he has taken perforce from them and go to the Pâtâla, where Prahlâda is residing.

28-29. Vyâsa said:—O King! Hearing thus the Devî's words, Asilomâ asked gladly, before the Devî, the powerful Asura Viḍâlâkhya:—Well, Viḍâlâkhya! You have heard just now all what the Devî has said; now are we to observe treaty or declare war. What are we to do under the circumstances?

30-34. Viḍâlâkṣya said:—Our king knows full well that his death will certainly take place in the battle; knowing this, he is not willing

to make peace, out of his egoism and vanity. He is seeing before him daily the deaths of the Dânavas and still he has sent us to battle. Who can overcome the destiny? The duty of a servant is a very difficult one; he will have to be always submissive and obedient, without caring the least for his own self-respect; just as the dancing dolls are completely under the hands of the actors and their movements vary according to the pulling of the wires employed in making them dance. How can we then go to our master and say such hard words as he would give away to the Devas all the gems and jewels and go down to Pâtâla with other Dânavas. One considers it one's duty to speak pleasant words though untrue; true words cannot be beneficial; true and at the same time beneficial words are very rare in this world; at such critical cases, one ought to remain silent. Especially heroes ought never to excite their kings by useless words; this is the essence of politics. We should never go and advise our king with eagerness what is best or to ask advice from him about such things; the king would then certainly be very angry. Therefore we ought to do our duties to the king, even if our lives be at stake. To consider our lives as nothing and to fight for our king are what is best for us.

35-57. Vyâsa said :—O King! Thus thinking, the two heroes then wore their coats of armour, mounted on their chariots and, with bows and arrows in their hands, became ready for fight. First Vidâlâkhya shot seven arrows; the great warrior Asilomâ stood aloof at a distance as a mere witness. The Divine Mother cut off those arrows to pieces with Her arrows, no sooner they reached Her, and then shot at Vidâlâkhya three arrows sharpened on stone. The demon Vidâlâkhya fell senselss by these arrows on the battle-field and after a short while died, as if ordained by Fate. Seeing Vidâlâksya thus dead, Asilomâ took up his bows and arrows and came up, for fight. The hero, then, raising his left hand, said briefly, thus:—"O Devî! I know that death is inevitable to the Dânavas; still I am ready to fight; for I am dependent: and Mahiṣa is of very dull intellect; he cannot make any distinction betweent what is really good and what is merely pleasant. I will never speak before him unpleasant words, though beneficial. Rather I will sacrifice my life in the battle-field than advise him anything, be that auspicious or inauspicious. The Dânavas are being killed no sooner they are shot at by your arrows; seeing this I consider Fate superior to all. Prowess does not lead to any success; Fie on one's prowess! Thus saying, the Demon began to shower arrows after arrows on the Devî; the Devî, too, cut them to pieces with Her own arrows before they came to Her; and, becoming angry, soon pierced him with arrows. The Devas witnessed this sight from above. The body of the

Demon was then covered with cuts and wounds; blood began to flow from them; the Demon consequently began to shine like the jovial Kimsuka tree. Asilomâ then lifted aloft his heavy iron club and ran after Chaṇḍikâ and hurt the lion on his head with anger. Not caring at all this severe stroke of the club inflicted by that powerful Demon, the lion tore asunder his arms with his claws. Then that dreadful Demon leapt with club in his hand and got up the shoulder of the lion and hit the Devî very hard. O King! The Devî, then, baffled the hit and cut off the Demon's head with Her sharp axe. The head being thus severed, the Demon was thrown on the ground with great force; seeing this, a general cry of distress arose among his soldiers. The Devas shouted aloud "Victory to the Devî" and chanted hymns to Her. The drums of the Devas resounded and the Gandarbhas began to dance in great joy. Seeing the two Demons thus lying dead on the battlefield, the lion killed some of the remaining forces by his sheer strength and ate up others, and made the battle field void of any persons. Some fled away in great distress to Mahiṣâsura. The fugitives began to cry aloud "Save us, save us" and said, "O King! Asilomâ and Viḍâlâkṣya are both slain; and those soldiers that remained were eaten up by the lion." Thus they told and plunged the King in an ocean of dire distress. Hearing their words, Mahiṣa became absent minded through pain and grief and began to think over the matter with great anxiety.

Here ends the Fifteenth Chapter of the Fifth Book on the slaying of Viḍâlâkṣa and Asilomâ in Śrîmad Devî Bhagâvatam, the Mahâ Purâṇam, of 18,000 verses by Maharṣi Veda Vyâsa.

CHAPTER XVI.

1-7. Vyâsa said:—O King! Hearing those words, the King Mahiṣa in anger addressed the charioteer Darûka:—"Bring over my chariot quickly. That chariot is drawn by one thousand excellent horses, is bedecked with banners flags, and ensigns, is furnished with various arms and weapons, and is endowed with good wheels of a white colour, and beautiful poles in which the yoke is fixed." The charioteer brought the chariot instantly aud duly informed the king "O King! I have got the chariot ready at your door, your beautiful chariot, bedecked with beautiful carpets and various arms and weapons." Hearing that the chariot had been brought, Mahîṣa thought, the Devî might not care him, seeing him ugly faced with a pair of horns and therefore decided to assume a human shape and then go to the battle. The beauty and cleverness are the delights

of women; therefore I will go before Her, with a beautiful body and with all the cleverness and dexterities. For I will never be delighted with anything but that woman looking at me with fondness and becoming passionately attached to me.

8-38. Thus thinking, the powerful King of the Demons quitted the buffalo appearance and assumed a beautiful human shape. He put on beautiful ornaments, armplates, etc., and wore divine cloths and had garlands on his neck and thus shone like a second Kandarpa, the god of Love. Taking, then, all the arrows and weapons, he mounted on the chariot, and, attended by his army, went to the Devî, elated with power and vanity. The Devî blew Her conchshell when She saw Mahisâsura, the lord of the Dânavas, come before Her with a handsome appearance, tending to captivate the minds of mistresses and surrounded by many powerful and valiant warriors. The King of the Demons heard the blow of the conchshell, wondrous to all, came up before the Devî and smilingly spoke to Her. thus:—O Devî! Whatever person there exists in this world, this wheel of Samsâra (the eternal round of births and deaths), be he or she a man or a woman, everyone always hankers after pleasure or happiness. And that pleasure is derived in this world by the combination of persons with each other; never is it seen where this combination is absent. Again this combination is of various kinds: I will mention them; Hear. Union is of various kinds according as it arises out of affection or out of natural consequences. Of these, I will now speak of unions coming out of affection, as far as my understanding goes. The union that comes between father, mother and their sons arises out of affection; it is therefore good. The union between brother and brother is middling, for mutual interests of give and take are there between the two. In fact, that union is considered as excellent which leads to happiness of the best sort and that union which leads to lesser happiness is known as mediocre. The union amongst the sailors, coming from distant lands, is known as natural. They come on various errands concerning their varied interests. This combination, because it offers the least amount of happiness, is considered as worst. The best union leads in this world to best happiness. O Beloved! The constant union of men and women of the same age is considered as par excellence; for it gives happiness of the very best sort. Both the parties, men and women, are elevated when they want to excel each other in their family connections, qualities, beauty, cleverness, dress, humility and propriety of conduct. Therefore, O Dear! If you establish with me that conjugal relation, you will get, no doubt, all the excellent happiness. Specially I will assume different forms at my mere will. All the Divine jewels and precious things that I have

acquired after defeating Indra and the other Devas in battle, and others are lying in my palace ; you can enjoy all of them as my queen consort or you can make a charity of them as you like. O Beautiful One ! I am your servant; consequently, at your word, I will no doubt quit my enmity with the Devas. In short, I will do anything that leads to your pleasure and happiness. O Sweet speaking One ! O Large-eyed One ! My heart is enchanted very much with your beauty ; I will do, therefore, as you order me. O One having a broad hip ! I am very much distressed ; I now take refuge unto You. O One having beautiful thighs ! I am very much struck with the arrows of Cupid, and I am very much discomforted ; therefore, save me. To protect one who has come under one's refuge is the best of all virtues. O One of a somewhat whitish body ! O One having a slender waist ! I will spend the remaining portion of my life in serving you as your obedient servant. Never will I act contrary to your orders to the risk even of my life. Take this as literally true and do accordingly. I now throw aside all my weapons before Your feet ; O Large eyed ! I am very much distressed by the arrows of Cupid ; dost Thou therefore shew Thy mercy on me. O Beautiful One ! Never I showed my weakness to Brahmâ and the other Devas ; but to-day I acknowledge that before You. I have defeated Brahmâ and others ; they are fully acquainted with my prowess in the battle-field. But, O Honoured Woman ! Though I am so powerful, I now acknowledge myself as your servant. Better look at me and grant your mercy.

34. Vyâsa said :—O King ! Mahiṣa, the lord of the Daityas, having said so, that beautiful Bhagavatî laughed loudly and spoke smiling :—

35-45. The Devî said :—I do not desire any other body than the Supreme One ! O Demon ! I am His Will-power ; I therefore create all these worlds. I am His Śivâ (auspicious) Prakriti (Nature) ; That Universal Soul is seeing Me. It is owing to His proxmity that I am appearing as the Eternal Consciousness, manifesting Itself as this Cosmos. As irons move owing to the proximity of magents, I, too, though inert, owing to His proximity, work consciously. I do not desire to enjoy the ordinary pleasures ; you are very dull and stupid ; there is no doubt in this, when you desire sexual union. For women are considerd as chains to hold men in bondage. Men bound up by iron chains can obtain freedom at any time; but when they are fastened by women, they can never obtain freedom. O Stupid ! You now want to serve the source of urine, etc. Take refuge under Peace ; peace will lead you to happiness. Great pain arises from connection with women ; you know this ; then why are you deluded ? Better avoid your enmity with the Devas and

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